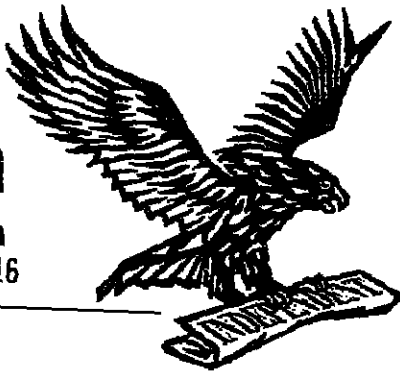




Paris for men
Functional fashion
Section Two, page 16



Frozen embryos: A mother's choice
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Frozen embryos: A mother's choice
Section Two, page 4

THE INDEPENDENT

3,034

TUESDAY 9 JULY 1996

WEATHER Cloudy early on, sunny later

40p (inc ASP)

'Dunblane will happen at any time again, unless decisive action is taken' – Colin Campbell QC at the Dunblane inquiry yesterday. Minutes later, a machete attack began in a Wolverhampton school...

Terror returns to the playground

PETER VICTOR

A man wielding a machete burst into an infants' school yesterday and ran amok, slashing at children and wounding a teacher. The attacker climbed over a fence into St Luke's Church of England school in Blakenhall, Wolverhampton. West Midlands, and attacked adults and pupils as they were enjoying a teddy bear's picnic.

The incident – echoing the Dunblane tragedy four months ago – came within minutes of Colin Campbell, QC, telling the judicial inquiry into the massacre at the Scottish school that a similar attack "will happen again at any time unless decisive action is taken".

Mr Campbell was still on his feet addressing the inquiry as the attack began shortly after 3pm. Parents were waiting to pick up their children and take them home. Several parents were helping teachers organise a picnic as part of end-of-term activities when the attacker scaled the school fence.

Three children and four adults were injured in the attack: a three-year-old boy, two four-year-old girls, a teacher, a mother, a playground leader and one other adult.

One parent, Bala Bains, 28, said he tried to divert the attacker's attention as he slashed out with the machete.

Mr Bains, a courier, was waiting to collect his son Amar, aged six, and niece, Kiran, five, from school when he saw a man loitering in nearby bushes: "I thought he was a litter collector," he said. "Then I saw him jump over the school wall and reach into his bag. He pulled out a huge machete. I didn't know

SCHOOL
March 1996: Thomas Hamilton shot dead one woman teacher and 16 five-year-olds at Dunblane primary school.
December 1995: London headmaster Philip Lawrence was knifed to death after helping a pupil who was being attacked by youths.
June 1994: Man with flame-thrower severely injured A-level pupils in Northern Ireland.
March 1994: Nikki Conroy, 12, stabbed to death by Stephen Wilkinson at Hill Garth School, Middlesbrough.
Summer 1993: Youth with shotgun and machete tried to hold a class hostage at Handsworth Wood Girls school, Birmingham.

on my mobile phone. He just walked straight towards one of the mothers and slashed at her head. She didn't even see him coming. She just went down, I don't think she moved.

"The guy jumped over a little 2ft fence where the kids' play area is and just started hacking at anybody and everybody.

I kept close to him and eventually got his attention by shouting 'Come on, get me you bastard'. He looked at me and moved towards me smiling. He tried to slash me with the knife but I jumped back and he missed. Then he just turned and walked away. He cut one more child before he finally left. He didn't even look as if he was panicking, he was very calm."

A spokesman for Wolverhampton's New Cross hospital said a woman aged 29 was in a serious condition and in the operating theatre. Three children aged three and four suffered dis-

figuring lacerations to the head. The condition of all three was stable and they were expected to undergo surgery.

Paul Shields, chief executive at New Cross Hospital, said: "The patients have some nasty injuries but their condition, as we see it at the moment, is not life-threatening. One of the adults and one of the children are in a serious condition."

"One child has facial injuries and another sustained injuries to the head. The rest had injuries on their legs and arms."

The attack ended when a parent chased a man from the school towards a nearby block of flats. Police surrounded the block, Villiers House, and the area cordoned off. Officers with riot gear and a trained negotiator waited for nearly two hours before taking away a man. But Superintendent Pat Wing, of West Midlands police, said later: "Nobody has yet been arrested. We are still searching the locality." He said the search was increasing in intensity and would continue through the night.

Parents from Dunblane, where gunman Thomas Hamilton murdered a teacher and 16 children before killing himself, were stunned by news of the attack. Their feelings were summed up by a local councillor, Arthur Ironside, who said: "We are all sickened by this atrocity. No one can understand how anyone can hurt little children. What possible benefit is there for this evil man?"

"Our own tragedy happened just four months ago. Now every parent involved will be reliving the hell of that day and the weeks that followed."

A spokesman for Dunblane Primary School said: "It's shattering to hear something like this could happen again. We thought it was a nightmare never to be repeated. To think other parents have to go through what we went through."

Wolverhampton's chair of education Bob Jones said security at St Luke's was up to date following the Dunblane tragedy. The school was surrounded by a fence, thought to be at least 6ft tall, and there were bolts and locks on all the gates and doors.

Gillian Shephard, Secretary of State for Education, said she was "horrified" by the attack. "My heartfelt sympathies go to those injured and their families."



Attack confirms fears of teachers

JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

The attack on St Luke's comes at a time when concern about school security has peaked, after a series of violent incidents in schools.

Headteachers last night attacked the Government for its delay in providing extra funds for school security.

Gillian Shephard, the Secretary of State for Education, promised more money in May, after the report of a working party set up following the death

of Philip Lawrence, the London headmaster who was stabbed to death. But she said it would not be available immediately.

Teachers recognise that it is impossible to protect all schools against lone attackers bent on violence, but the National Association of Head Teachers believes more could be done.

Heads reckon that £50m is needed to pay for measures recommended by the working party, including closed circuit television cameras, intruder alarms, security fencing and security locks.

At present, schools have to bid with each other for grants to install closed circuit television.

Rowie Shaw, a spokeswoman for the association, said: "This money should be available for all schools. This kind of tragedy can occur in any school in the country and it is no reflection at all on the school that this has happened."

David Blunkett, the shadow Secretary of State for Education, emphasised that better security alone would not solve the problem.

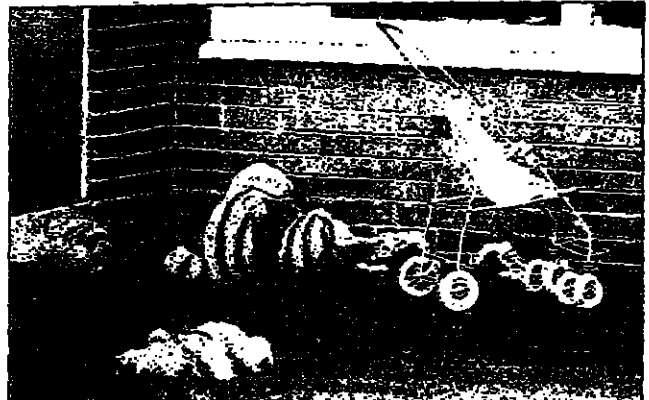
"While improving school security is important, it is also essential that the potential attackers are identified. There must be the closest co-operation between GPs, hospital staff, police and the probation service, rather than relying on fortress schooling."

Robin Squire, the schools minister, said money for security was the highest priority. "We are doing everything we can. Can I also, as a parent, reassure parents that this ghastly incident was not typical and that schools remain over-

whelmingly safe and are getting safer."

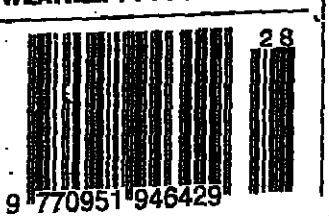
A new law to come into force shortly will make it a criminal offence to carry an offensive weapon on school premises.

Eamonn O'Kane, deputy general secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, said: "Tragically this event seems to underline the points that we and others have been making for some time, which is that security for schools is going to have to become a priority."



Aftermath: Children's toys lie abandoned after the attack during a teddy bear's picnic. Photograph: Caters

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World takes first steps to ban the bomb

CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY
Defence Correspondent

International legal restrictions have been placed on nuclear weapons for the first time, hastening a growing trend to avoid dependence on nuclear forces.

The World Court in The Hague yesterday set important limitations on the use or threat of use of such weapons. But the Court, which is the world's supreme judicial body, stopped short of an outright ban on the possession, use or threat of use of nuclear devices.

Last night, anti-nuclear pressure groups, including CND, were claiming victory in the close-run decision. But diplomatic sources took comfort in the Court's refusal to rule that the threat or use of nuclear

weapons was illegal in all circumstances.

The Court ruled: "The threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict and, in particular, the principles and rules of humanitarian law."

However, it added: "The Court cannot conclude definitively whether the threat or use of nuclear weapons would be lawful or unlawful in an extreme circumstance of self-defence, in which the very survival of a state would be at stake."

Nevertheless, its unexpectedly robust decision delighted anti-nuclear campaigners, who had feared the Court would duck the issue.

The landmark decision has been keenly awaited by anti-

nuclear groups and the five official nuclear powers since a large majority of the UN General Assembly asked for it in December 1994.

The case was also crucial to the authority of the World Court. The vote was balanced on a knife edge – seven judges voted for the decision, seven against, with a casting vote made by the Algerian President, Mohammed Bedjaoui.

It was the first time the International Court of Justice had been asked to rule on the legality of any weapon, but its decision had awesome implications.

If it had refused to make a ruling, it consigned itself to irrelevance and humiliation.

A decision that the threat or use of nuclear weapons was il-

legal would have made the policy of nuclear deterrence – on which the five official nuclear powers have depended for their security – illegal.

That did not happen yesterday, but threats by Britain and other nuclear-armed countries to use nuclear weapons in response to limited strikes or against third world states were ruled illegal, unless their very survival was at stake.

It has long been understood that the five official nuclear powers – the US, Russia, Britain, France and China – would only use nuclear weapons as a weapon of last resort.

However, the rise of nuclear "threshold" powers – Iraq, India, Pakistan and Israel, which do have nuclear weapons but are not official members of

the nuclear club – has given rise to doctrines of "sub-strategic" nuclear deterrence, in which small, highly-accurate nuclear weapons would be delivered against a renegade state or Third World country, possibly as a "warning shot".

Britain cancelled the RAF's tactical nuclear missile, which was partly intended for this role, but announced it would, if necessary, arm Trident missiles with single warheads to do the same job.

The World Court ruling effectively says that any form of "sub-strategic" nuclear deterrence is, by definition, illegal.

The Court has no mechanisms to enforce its judgment, but it is in tune with new military thinking.

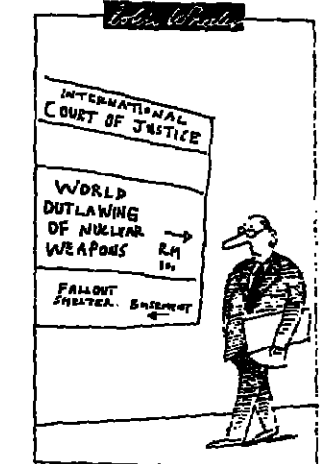
The verdict will reinforce

the pressure for less reliance on nuclear weapons which has been gathering momentum as more powerful and accurate conventional weapons become available, such as those used in the Gulf war against Iraq.

The US Navy recently published a paper stressing the need for massive and highly accurate conventional strikes to bridge the gap between operations by conventional armed forces and nuclear strikes.

The Royal Navy is to get US Tomahawk cruise missiles with high-explosive warheads to do a similar job, and the RAF is hoping to learn shortly which missiles suitable for hitting strategic targets from a safe distance it is to get. That decision could be made this week.

Though the verdict is in line



with prevailing military trends, none of the established nuclear powers is yet ready to eschew nuclear weapons as its last resort. Nuclear deterrence is the policy of the present Government in Britain, and, Tony Blair reaffirmed two weeks ago, of a future Labour Government too.

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news

Strike sends Lady Olga into a road rage

Transport questions in the House. And the main transport question, given yesterday's London tube strike (the third in three weeks), was how did our various heroes and heroines get to the House?

Clare Short, she told Sir George Young, Secretary of State for Transport, had "walked from Euston [where her train from Birmingham had terminated] with a very heavy bag". But was there no passing motorist who could have assisted her? Is chivalry dead? I would far rather believe that, given London's traffic speeds, they were all travelling far more slowly than the determined Ms Short, whose majestic progress down Tottenham Court Road,



DAVID AARONOVITCH

as captured on short-circuit television, should now be made available on video for hire.

Lady Olga Maitland (Con, Sutton and Cheam) must have travelled most of the way by aeroplane, having just been the recipient of some hospitality (chronicled in this newspaper) on the part of a chap called Joe

Toblerone (or something), head honcho of Maltese Tourism. She had clearly been looking forward to joining the democratic throng, lugging her weekend bags on to the Piccadilly Line and then straight to the House. Unhappily the industrial action thwarted her plans and forced her into a vehicle of some description (probably some appalling Jag or vulgar Merc).

To Labour cries of "look, it's the Maltese Falcon", a somewhat restrained Lady Olga (only one string of pearls, her more severe pair of glasses, no swimsuit) told MPs that the strike was forcing people to use their cars, "making road rage more likely" (this is incontestable: if no one was on the

roads there would be no road rage. Critics of Lady Olga should bear such insights in mind). More controversial was her suggestion that it was "all because the party opposite will not condemn strikes". Lady Olga must be forgiven her lapses of memory (she travels abroad a great deal, apparently), but most of us old things know that the worst strikes happen precisely when Labour does condemn them. "Someone give 'er a ride 'ome", said Dennis Skinner, unhelpfully. The transport minister Steve Norris (whose wit and urbanity will be missed when he retires at the next election) replied that he thought that road rage was as old as motoring. "In the

1920s they used hit each other over the head with starting handles," he said. Motorists needed "patience and calm". Which were qualities that appeared to desert William O'Brien (Lab, Normanton).

Mr O'Brien was once a coal miner and, with his craggy features, looks as though he was himself hewn from a very deep seam. Reddening with anger Mr O'Brien condemned those who committed violence in road rage cases, especially where killing took place. "The penalty should fit the crime!" he thundered. Personally I look forward to public executions on the M25 when New Labour comes to power, but I should warn Mr O'Brien that this pledge wasn't

in my copy of *New Life for Britain*.

It is widely believed that the erratic Dame Elaine Kellie-Bowman (Con, Lancaster) does not have long distances to travel to the House, since she probably occupies secure accommodation in a small apartment just above Big Ben. Nevertheless, she had thoughts on road rage. "In my day," she said firmly, "it would have been known as temper tantrums." So here's today's challenge: £10 to any reader who can tell me when Dame Elaine's day was. And £15 for anyone who dares stop Clare Short next Tuesday (when Aslef strikes again) and offer her – and her bag – a lift. *Union barons, page 6*

Drumcree locked in battle of wills

MICHAEL STREETER

A drawn-out battle of wills between Orangemen and police looked set to continue last night as the "siege of Drumcree" sparked outbreaks of violence in Northern Ireland.

The Ulster Unionist leader, David Trimble, called on the Prime Minister, John Major, to intervene as for the second day Royal Ulster Constabulary officers barred loyalists from marching through a Catholic area of Portadown, Co Armagh. Tensions in both communities ran high as scores of loyalist youths hijacked and set fire to four lorries in the town centre after police had broken up protests.

Mr Trimble accused officers of "deliberate provocation" after they fired plastic bullets at loyalists as soldiers set up a concrete and barbed wire barricade on the Drumcree Road leading into the Catholic area of Garvaghy Road.

The district Orange leader, Harold Gracey, promised further action throughout the province unless they were able to march down the route. "We have our contingency plans. I think the province is going to erupt," he added. "This is not just the siege of Drumcree but the siege of Ulster."

Political leaders warned the growing violence could threaten the fragile peace in the province.

The stand-off looked likely to last longer than the three-day confrontation last year when loyalists eventually marched along the route in silence.

Among the 5,000-strong Catholic community the feeling was of "resolute determination" not to allow the Orangemen to have their way again. Brendan MacCionnaith of the Garvaghy Road Residents Association said: "We have had two days of violence and there is no sign of the Unionist leaders trying to control their people." In an attempt to break



Beyond the barricade: Orangemen at Portadown yesterday where the standoff with the RUC continues

Photograph: Paul Faith/Pacemaker

the logjam Mr Trimble and the Democratic Unionist leader, Ian Paisley, called on Downing Street for action.

The worst violence came in Portadown town centre when police broke up loyalist demonstrations at noon. At least four lorries were set on fire to establish impromptu road-blocks which the Army cleared away.

The RUC, which on Saturday decided to ban the march, erected a concrete and barbed wire barrier at the point where the marchers were halted on Sunday, 50 yards from Drum-

cree church. As officers moved in to clear the way they were pelted with missiles, and responded with plastic bullets.

Last night up to 2,000 police officers faced several thousand loyalist protesters.

Police said it was too early to link the murder of a Catholic man found dead near Lurgan, a few miles from Portadown, with the sectarian disturbances in the town.

Part-time taxi-driver Michael McGoldrick, 31, from Lurgan, was found dead with head injuries yesterday morning.

The sectarian divide, page 15

'What is the Twelfth of July but being bored in a field?'

Early on Sunday morning, I was transported in a red MG Midget sports car to Portadown by Graham, historian, teacher and Orangeman, who is wearing a three-piece suit to set off his bowler hat, orange collar and white gloves.

After a press conference, David Trimble, the DUP leader, brought a book, he feared it would prove too short to keep him going throughout the expected siege.

I engaged in a lengthy conversation with a notorious, ear-ringed, skinhead loyalist non-Orangeman known locally as King Rat, who, in current coy terminology, is close to the UVE. In his articulate and uncompromising way, he indicated that the last straw brings the loyalist ceasefire effectively to an end. He called me "Dear" throughout, for, except in republican politically correct circles, Ulster is a place where women are the fair sex and are referred to as girls or ladies.

On foot, we accompanied the 2,000 or so Orangemen on their four-mile parade to Drumcree parish church; the streets were lined with cheering crowds. It was clear that had the Orangemen backed down, they

Ruth Dudley Edwards, a frequent attendee at Orange marches, on the atmosphere before last night's violence

would have been given the white-feather treatment: one child carried a sign saying: "Daddy, don't let them take my culture away".

As with the other Orange marches I've attended, it was very much a good-humoured family event: there were hundreds of women and children around the place, and Daphne Trimble arrived with overnight necessities for David, who conducted a long telephone conversation with a journalist in London, while sitting with his three of his young children at a table outside the church gates.

Having been told by a large Orangeman that Catholics were so corrupted by their religion that they sent their children to paedophile priests, and that Gerry Adams was the Son of Satan and will be alive when the world comes to an end, I reported to Graham that I

have met a genuine, 100 per cent bigot. "There was," he observed judiciously, "a difference between a bigot and a nut."

By mid-afternoon, I realised that the secret weapon of Ulster Protestants was an immense capacity for enduring boredom. Orangemen sat in the middle of nowhere, equably contemplating days of hanging about waiting. I acquainted Graham with this great truth. "But what else are monthly lodge meetings for, but to equip Orangemen to be bored?" he asked. "And what is the Twelfth of July, but being bored in a field?"

There was excitement, though, when two women walked through, carrying a large poster saying: "It must be war... Eat Ade's heart" and Ade-sporting became the popular sport. At midnight I arrived at the house of my host, another historian and teacher, and asked why, after his local church parade, he didn't go on to Drumcree to bolster up his brethren. "It was awkward," he said. "A Catholic neighbour dropped in for a chat and I thought it would be tactless to leave him to go to Drumcree. But I'll be there tomorrow night."

Dead girl's father is quizzed

LOUISE JURY

The father of a schoolgirl found battered to death beside a railway line was last night being questioned over her death.

Police said Alan Priest, 34, the natural father of Jade Matthews, nine, of Bootle in Merseyside, was being held as part of routine investigations into her killing.

They were also anxious to speak to three young boys seen on the railway line where Jade was discovered with serious head injuries early yesterday.

Dozens of people turned out to search for the missing girl as the case reignited painful memories in the community of the killing of toddler Jamie Bulger by two 10-year-olds in 1993.

Jade Matthews, an only child, left her home in Eaton Avenue, Bootle, at 4pm on Sunday to go out to play.

Her mother Denise, 31, and stepfather Stephen, 37, became worried when she had not returned by 7.30pm. They tried to

find her, and finally raised the alarm with police at 9pm.

Early yesterday, a police dog handler discovered Jade's body lying alongside a rarely-used goods rail track one and a half miles away.

She was still wearing the pink sweatshirt, blue jeans and white Reebok trainers she had on when she left home.

Detective Superintendent Geoff MacDonald, who was involved in the Bulger inquiry, said three boys were seen by a passer-by on the railway track at about 8pm on Sunday.

Mr MacDonald stressed they would not be in trouble for trespassing on the line, but said: "We are most anxious to trace those children and would ask them to come forward."

He was keeping an "open mind" about whether children could have been involved in Jade Matthews' death.

Mr MacDonald said her severe facial injuries appeared likely to have been caused by a blunt instrument. It was too car-

ly to say whether or not she had been sexually assaulted.

Forensic experts were examining a number of bloodstained items found at the scene, including a plank of wood.

Neighbours said Jade was a "little angel". Tommy Cude, 61, said: "Jade was a very pleasant well-mannered little girl."

Bob Branch, head teacher at Jade's school, Orrell Primary, said the mood among pupils was very sad. "We are just trying to cope as best we can."

Two-year-old Jamie Bulger died three years ago after he left his mother's side in Bootle's Strand shopping centre with two boys, Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, both aged 10.

They dragged Jamie two and a half miles to a stretch of railway track, where he was then hit with bricks and a heavy metal bar and punched, kicked and stamped upon.

Thompson and Venables were both found guilty of murder and ordered to be detained at Her Majesty's Pleasure.

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

A Cabinet reshuffle was ruled out by the Prime Minister's office yesterday, lifting the threat of humiliating dismissal or demotion from some, and killing all hope of pre-election promotion for many more. John Major had already given a personal assurance that Douglas Hogg, the beleaguered Agriculture Minister, would be safe – in spite of rampant Westminster speculation that he was for the chop because of his mishandling of the BSE affair.

But there has also been further speculation about the fate of Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, and John Gummer, the Secretary of State for the Environment. However, two middle-ranking ministers, Steven Norris and Tim Eggar, are both standing down from the Commons at the general election, and they have told Mr Major that they want to give up their Government posts this summer, opening the way for Mr Major to promote some backbenchers and give them their last chance of a taste of office before the election.

North Essex Health Authority has played down claims that 17 children were stricken with a serious crippling illness after paddling on a beach. It said it knew of only three children in its area suffering from the rare condition, called Henoch-Schönlein purpura syndrome, and there was no evidence to link the cases with allegedly polluted sea water in Harwich. However, it appealed to all GPs and neighbouring health authorities to check their records just in case. Fears were sparked by the case of Jessica Macrae, six, who missed eight months of school after falling ill with the syndrome, and her brother Duncan, five. *Louise Jury*

Six out of ten parents are satisfied with the Government's nursery vouchers scheme, but it has had almost no effect on parental choice, according to a survey published yesterday. Labour pointed out that nearly £2.75m of vouchers had been issued to parents, but not redeemed.

Hardly any parents used the list of providers to choose their nursery place, though the scheme aimed to encourage them to shop around. More than 90 per cent of parents in the four areas where it is being piloted have applied for vouchers and more than eight in ten have redeemed them, says the Government-commissioned research. *Judith Judd*

The death of a policeman, for nearly 100 years the only unsolved murder of a Metropolitan police officer, was marked yesterday with the unveiling of a new memorial. A simple black slate plaque, engraved with gold lettering, was unveiled to the memory of PC Frederick Atkins, 23, on the wall outside the police station in New Malden High Street, 115 years after he was shot by a burglar.

His death sparked such public outrage that extra trains had to be laid to carry more than 2,000 mourners to his funeral at St Mary's Church, Walton, his home town. But despite a vast manhunt, nobody was ever charged.

Sir Edward Heath celebrated his 80th birthday by attacking John Major's strategy for dealing with the Labour Leader, Tony Blair. Sir Edward, the former Conservative Prime Minister, who will be standing again at the next election for Old Bexley and Sidcup, said the Tories' new slogan, "New Labour, New Danger" was "absolutely wrong".

He warned in a BBC radio interview that the Tories could not win the next general election by harking back to the past. "For young voters, just getting their first vote at the age of 18, to go on talking about the 60s and 70s and go back to the 1926 General Strike doesn't carry any weight with them at all." *Colin Brown*

One in 100 people suffers from depression during the winter months which is so severe it can be disabling, a psychiatrist said yesterday. Dr Chris Thompson, an expert in Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD, at Southampton University, said sufferers showed impaired function of a chemical in the brain during the winter. In the summer this appeared to be restored.

SAD was first described in 1985 and many scientists remain sceptical of its existence. However, all mammals display seasonal differences in their physiological functioning, and doctors report success with sufferers treated with light therapy. Melatonin, produced by the pineal gland in the brain, which helps to maintain bodily rhythms, has also been found to be far lower in SAD sufferers than non-depressed people in winter months.

Daley Thompson gave his stamp of approval yesterday to a new set of first class stamps from the Royal Mail. The double Olympic champion unveiled the stamps, in celebration of 100 years of the Olympic games. Featuring both Olympic and Paralympic athletes, they show a sprinter, a javelin thrower, a swimmer and a triumphant athlete with the Olympic rings behind.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD

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As another solo yachswoman comes home after months in peril on the sea, Rebecca Fowler asks what drives those who dare Around the world – or just around the bend?

She returned to a hero's welcome, a champagne spray and wailing sirens. Samantha Brewster, 29, glided into Southampton yesterday in her 67ft yacht after becoming the first woman to sail solo the "wrong" way around the world.

But as Ms Brewster stepped onto land, exhausted by the 247-day marathon, and joined the growing list of champions of endurance, a question loomed. What madness is it that drives so many modern Britons into the eye of the storm?

Ms Brewster said yesterday from the *Heath Insured*, which would normally carry a crew of 14: "I'm more mad than I thought. It was so hard to keep going, not having anyone else out there. Although I did get a lot of advice from the team on the shore, you're completely on your own out there. So many times I thought: why am I doing this?"

The challenge was put to her at the wedding of Chay Blyth, the sailor who defied sceptics in 1971 by being the first to complete that trip alone.

Ms Brewster said: "Everyone had had too much champagne, and I thought it would be forgotten about once everybody had sobered up."

Instead, last October, she began her odyssey from Southampton accompanied only by her mascot, Gutsy the toy gorilla.

Her cargo included 500 long-life dried meals, tins of spinach, 36 boxes of porridge, six jars of honey, 1.5kg of jelly babies and a bottle of rum.

In the course of her journey, Ms Brewster faced some of the greatest physical challenges.

She almost gave up when the mainsail was damaged as she approached Australia, and it took her more than 48 hours to repair the huge bulk, which weighs around a quarter of a ton.

Ms Brewster has followed an arguably glorious but mad British tradition.

As a maritime people, Britons have always been forced on to the waters by their island status and driven to the forefront of naval endeavour and exploration. As knowledge grew and the world became smaller, sailors took up more personal challenges and moved into yachting in record numbers.

In 1898, Captain Joshua



Singular pleasure: Samantha Brewster (left) in her yacht, *Heath Insured* after becoming the first woman to sail the "wrong way" round the world; Chay Blyth (above), who crossed the Atlantic in 1973; and Chay Blyth (below), who was first to circumnavigate the globe the wrong way



her sailing days. She believes that there is a degree of madness involved in taken on the seas alone.

"It wasn't a sporting thing for me," she said. "It was more of an odyssey and I could never have carried on. For me, the sea is incredibly boring after a while. It just goes on and on. It was a spiritual thing, but it was a very short period of my life."

The tradition of lone voyages has become so established among British sailors that round-the-world trips are relatively commonplace.

Only the speed in which they are completed, or the handicaps that are overcome, make them extraordinary.

Leslie Powles, 70, dubbed the Ancient Mariner, returned from his third round-the-world voyage on Sunday. The four-month trip nearly cost him his life. He went off-air, and friends feared he had been lost at sea.

Despite being knocked unconscious, and running short of food and water he survived aboard his 34ft sloop, *Solitaire*. He rationed himself to a quarter of a tin of corned beef and two spoonfuls of rice a day and finally sailed into Lymington in Hampshire at the weekend.

Mr Powles said: "There was water coming in the boat all the time, but I could not move for 24 hours. I just sat there and watched it... I am not going to go round the world again. I think three times is enough and you start to get giddy if you go round more than three times."

However, the courageous folly of Britain's solo voyagers was defended yesterday by John Reed, secretary of the World Sailing Speed Record Council, the official body set up to monitor the challenges to existing records for completing voyages.

Mr Reed said: "People have started to look at it as a challenge to break time records, which is becoming more and more difficult as they get faster and faster. It's a natural part of human endeavour. They're certainly not mad."

He added: "They're extremely keen yachtsmen who are very self-reliant, and wish to prove their abilities, which are considerable. People who are mad in yachts jump overboard or drown."

Leading article, page 13

Sloucan, a Canadian, was the first man to sail solo round the world; then, in 1969, a Briton, Robin Knox-Johnston circumnavigated it non-stop for the first time alone. In 1973, Clare Francis made a single-handed transatlantic crossing, and Mike Golding set the record last year as the fastest man to sail the

wrong way round the world in just 161 days.

Ms Brewster said: "When I felt like giving up, it was my family and friends who saw me through. My brother sent me a letter saying he'd gone through life doing all the normal things and he was so proud his sister had set out to do something like

this and could achieve it. That was very special."

According to psychologists, her personality fits exactly the profile of the peculiarly British breed of solo sailors. Ms Brewster, a farmer's daughter, is fiercely self-reliant, and, on her own admission, is intolerant of other people's weaknesses.

Dr George Silk, a psychologist who has worked with yacht crews, said: "Compared to other people, they can be intensely assertive and impulsive, certainly eccentric, though not entirely barking mad. The most surprising thing with Chay Blyth was his lack of organisation and impulsiveness."

He added: "There was this sense of 'just get the money together, go off and have a go', which, by any rational standards, is an unusually impulsive way of going about things. That is certainly what separates these explorers from other people."

This impulsiveness is shared by other modern-day adventurers, including the explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes. He has described how he often forgets to take the right equipment on treks and tends to improvise as he goes along, making things fit his needs along the way.

Ms Francis, now better known as a best-selling crime writer, is reluctant to remember

Misplaced love that makes women's lives a misery

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

For six months she tolerated his presence in her life, at first more irritated than anxious as he began following her home from work, and standing close up behind her on the station platform and in the train.

Then he took to standing outside her house all night. Whatever the hour, whatever the weather, if she looked out of the window she would see him across the street. She wanted it to stop but the police seemed powerless against the man who stalked her.

The woman, a client of Dr Paul Mullen, a British forensic psychiatrist at Monash University in Melbourne and a world authority on stalking behaviour, was very strong mentally. She thought she could cope. Dr Mullen said - until the evening when she scored her first small victory over the man.

He was following her home from work when she darted into a shop. She went out of the back door and ran to the station convinced she had given him the slip. Then she saw him; the top of his head appeared over the embankment, and she watched mesmerised as he scaled a wall, slithered down the steep slope to the railway line and braved the live rails and trains to reach the platform. He climbed up and took his usual position behind her. That was when she "freaked out", Dr Mullen said.

Today the Government launches its consultation document on anti-stalking legislation, and Dr Mullen has added his voice to calls for Britain to follow the United States and Australia with laws to protect the victims and improve access to psychiatric help for the perpetrators who he said can be cured of their obsessional behaviour.

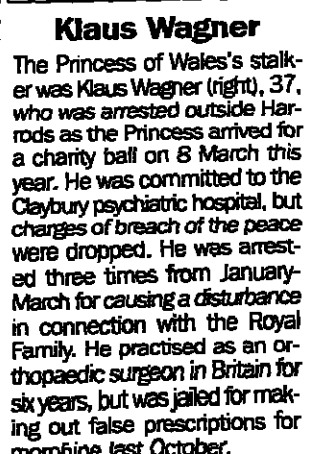
One in seven victims of stalking experience post-traumatic stress syndrome and one-quarter of them think about suicide, Dr Mullen told an international meeting of psychiatrists in London yesterday. For his former client, the breaking point came with the realisation that her stalker would put his own life at risk in order to be close to her.

Men driven by obsession



Robert Hoskins

The singer Madonna testified against Robert Hoskins (left) in a United States court last March, telling the judge that she had been suffering from nightmares and even felt forced to sell her house because of his unwelcome attentions. Hoskins, 38, was later sentenced to 10 years in prison for stalking and making terrorist threats. The court was told that he had vowed to marry Madonna or cut her throat. He was arrested when a bodyguard shot him as he tried to break into her estate.



Klaus Wagner

The Princess of Wales's stalker was Klaus Wagner (right), 37, who was arrested outside Harrods as the Princess arrived for a charity ball on 8 March this year. He was committed to the Claybury psychiatric hospital, but charges of breach of the peace were dropped. He was arrested three times from January-March for causing a disturbance in connection with the Royal Family. He practised as an orthopaedic surgeon in Britain for six years, but was jailed for making out false prescriptions for morphine last October.



John Hinckley

Jodie Foster was stalked in the United States by John Hinckley (left), now 41, who attempted to assassinate President Ronald Reagan on 30 March 1981, and claimed it was a stunt to impress Foster. A court found Hinckley not guilty by reason of insanity and he is now incarcerated in a mental hospital in Washington. His obsession with the actress began after her role as 12-year-old prostitute in the film *Taxi Driver*. Hinckley showered Foster with love letters and phone calls.

"She thought 'if he would do that, what wouldn't he do'... What destroys people is not a dramatic incident or physical assault but the apprehension persistence of someone in their lives, of not knowing what they will do next," Dr Mullen said.

"In fact many of the victims are relieved if an assault is made because then they have some recourse to law."

His study of 80 victims of stalkers, presented to the meeting of the Association of European Psychiatrists, is one of the most de-

tailed to date. It reveals the most common form of harassment is sending unwanted flowers, chocolates, pizzas and pornographic magazines. But there are more sinister variations: one woman was sent a beheaded cat, another a pig's head with a threat nailed on it, and two were sent woodoo dolls impaled with pins. Two victims moved countries to evade their stalkers, from New Zealand to Australia, only to be followed there. Many are forced to change jobs.

Most stalkers are men but woman also stalk men and Dr Mullen has studied eight cases where women were stalked by other women. "The motive is not always sexual," he said. "One of the most persistent women stalkers was looking for the ideal friend. She was heterosexual but stalked other women because she was looking for a sort of mother figure."

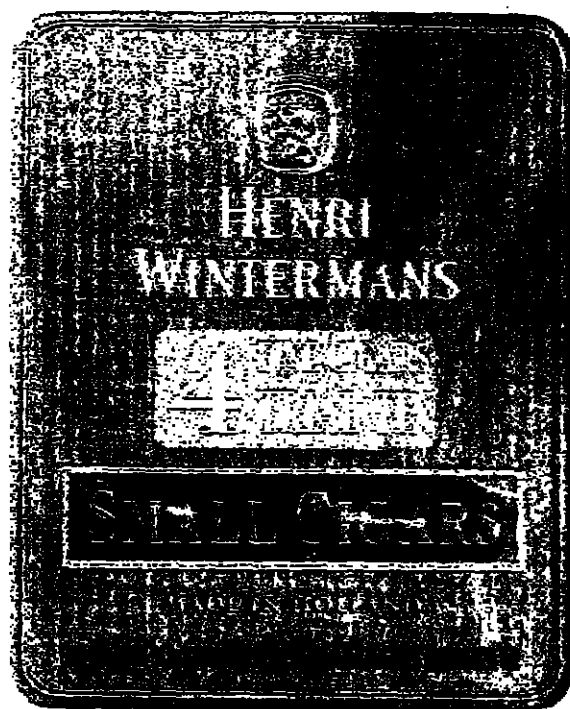
More than half the victims were threatened by a stalker and one-third were physically assaulted. However, one stalker just wanted his victim to listen; he wrestled her to the ground, sat on her chest and read a love poem to her.

One-third of the victims had no acquaintance or only a very casual acquaintance with their shadow. One-third were former lovers - the stalker could not believe that he or she had been rejected and was driven by rage and incomprehension, or a desire to wreak revenge. Another third had met at work, and the obsession may have been prompted by a missed promotion or failure to get a new job.

A minority of the perpetrators suffer from erotomania, Dr Mullen said. This is a mental disorder which manifests as a morbid and delusional pre-occupation with a person whom they "love", and whose behaviour to them is always interpreted as love. Another group are the socially incompetent for whom this is the closest they can get to having a relationship. Many are intellectually disabled, he said.

Finally, there is a tiny number of dangerous, predatory stalkers who take sadistic pleasure in the fear they induce in their victims, and may make a sexual or violent attack. Some serial killers exhibit this pattern.

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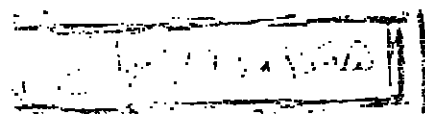
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MPs' rise: Ministers move to cool the backbenchers

Cut in petrol perk fuels Tory revolt on pay

COLIN BROWN and JOHN RENTOU

The Tory MP Nicholas Winterton was last night threatening to lead a Conservative backbench revolt over a threat to cut MPs' mileage allowances from 74p per mile to 47p as part of their pay package.

The move was gathering support among disgruntled Labour MPs who say they could be worse off, in spite of a proposed 46 per cent increase, because of the proposals. The Government, which is calling on MPs to support pay restraint, was last night seeking to play on the discontent by tabling a motion for a vote tomorrow enabling the MPs to keep their 74p mileage allowance providing they limit their pay rise to 3 per cent.

There were also signs of a split in the Shadow Cabinet over Tony Blair's decision to back John Major's call for pay rises to be limited to 3 per cent while allowing a free vote. Some were furious with Mr Blair. "If we don't get the pay rise now, we will never get them under a

Labour Government," said one of Mr Blair's colleagues.

Mr Winterton, MP for Congleton, will table an amendment to seek a review of mileage allowances. That would allow the MPs to vote for the 26 per cent pay rise, increasing MPs' pay from £34,085 to £43,000 a year.

Labour MPs calculated that the taxed pay rise would deliver a net £5,600 a year increase, but they would lose at least £5,400 with the cut in mileage allowances for those with large cars who do 20,000 miles a year. As the allowance is taxed, they would be worse off.

Soundings among MPs yesterday suggested a close vote, with many Labour frontbenchers and whips intending to ignore Mr Blair's lead, and the backbenchers of both main parties in favour of a pay rise.

Despite Mr Blair's declaration that he favoured restraint, he is expected to miss the vote. Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, declared yesterday that he would be "voting for restraint".

In January, 298 MPs, nearly half the membership of the House, signed a motion calling for the issue of their pay to be referred to an independent body. Nearly 200 of the MPs who signed were Labour, including frontbenchers and whips. Most Labour signatories were yesterday intending to vote for the proposed pay rise.

"If you ask for an independent review you have to stand by that," said Angela Eagle, MP for Wallasey. "It is ridiculous that the Prime Minister's advisers earn more than he does, but the quid pro quo has to be

that MPs have no outside earnings at all."

Senior Tory backbenchers agreed: "What is the point of calling for an independent review if you're not going to accept the findings?" asked one. He predicted many ministers and their aides would stay away.

The main group of Labour MPs who signed the January motion who say they will not vote for the review body's recommendation are leftwingers. Tony Banks said: "I am not voting for my own money." He signed the original motion to take the decision away from MPs, he said.



Profits from misfortune: The Charles and Diana no-more-loving cups

Photographer: Nicholas Turpin

Royal divorce is a trade for mugs

JOJO MOYES

Divorce: it's a mug's game. Or soon will be. If demand for the one marked "Charles and Di Divorce" is anything to go by.

The specialist china company J and S Chown in Cornwall has increased its original production run of 300 mugs - showing the Welsh and Union flags drooping and the Prince and Princess looking away from each other - to 2,200.

With the multi-million pound divorce due possibly within weeks, collectors worldwide are requesting the £9.99 bone china memento.

"We didn't feel comfortable about doing it at first," said Wendy Chown, the company's sales director, but "It could do us some lovely business."

"Andy and Fergie Divorce" mugs are also planned. Miss Chown would not say whether the design featured toes.

The first royal mug was for Charles II's accession in 1660.



Winterton: Threatening to lead a Tory rebellion

Commons couple drive hard bargain

Nicholas Winterton, the Tory MP for Macclesfield, makes no excuses for driving a £45,000 Range Rover which does about 20 miles to the gallon on the motorway, writes Colin Brown.

He and his wife Ann, who is the Conservative MP for the neighbouring constituency of Congleton, travel together on Mondays the 180 miles from Cheshire to Westminster.

Their 4.6 litre Range Rover qualifies for a mileage allowance at the rate of 74p a mile, which works out at £133.20. He does not believe claiming the expenses of £266 for the round trip is excessive.

"Two rail tickets would be considerably more than that," he said. Travelling by Range Rover, said Mr Winterton, ensures he is "comfortable and safe" on the journey.

"When you are going to do 180 miles on the motorways that are a harrowing to say the least, you should be able to

arrive in comfort and in a reasonable frame of mind, and sufficiently alert."

Rail travel would not be possible for two busy MPs keeping a flat in London and a house in the country, he added. They have to travel each Monday with their cases, food, which they bring from the constituency, clean clothes and clean sheets.

"Several people have said to me over the weekend that it is not the right time [for MPs to make demands about pay].

"Frankly, there is never a right time. I am considering putting down an amendment saying this is a matter which should be resolved by a committee because I don't think Parliament should say what sort of car MPs should drive."

Mr Winterton is also concerned that retiring MPs would lose some of their pension entitlement if the pay rises - which are linked to pensions - are pegged to 3 per cent.

DAILY POEM

Propitiation

By Elma Mitchell

He always apologized to statues
And sometimes to furniture, when he bumped into it.
He felt no superiority to insects
But removed them carefully from kitchen surfaces.

He sat at the wheel of a car,
Thinking of a world without predators
Or generals.

A moment's absentmindedness -
A child on a bicycle died.

No, no, it didn't. It never happened.
But he lived all his life with this catastrophe
In imagination, as he ferried his insects
To places of safety, and apologized to statues.

Last summer Penguin relaunched its *Modern Poets* series, which first appeared in 1962. This June saw the publication of volume 6 (U A Fanthorpe, Elma Mitchell, Charles Causley) and volume 7 (Donald Davie, Samuel Menashe, Allen Curnow). It is timely and welcome space for Elma Mitchell, now in her seventies, a poet who is well known in the West Country, but has perhaps not reached the wider audience she deserves. Her four collections are published by Peterloo Poets.

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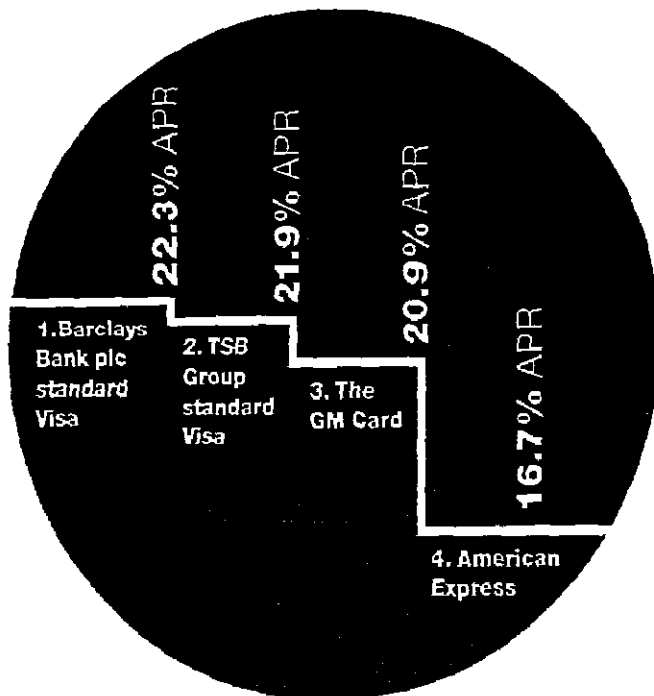
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news

Airline peace hopes take off as Tube workers dig in

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

Fresh talks are to be held in an attempt to avert an indefinite strike by pilots at British Airways due to begin next Tuesday.

As Bob Ayling, chief executive of the airline, responded to the union's call for negotiations, Tube drivers in London staged their third 24-hour strike over working time.

Management said it improved strike-day services to run nearly 40 per cent of the timetable with the help of the RMT transport union. Future assistance may not be forthcoming, however. Leaders of the RMT are due to announce the result of a strike ballot among their own members tomorrow.

Law Adams, general secretary of the drivers' union, and his executive are due today to consider an invitation to take the dispute to the conciliation



Alan Johnson of the Communication Workers' Union believes that strikes at the Royal Mail could damage Labour's electoral chances, and that the Government may lift the Royal Mail's monopoly.

Mr Johnson, 46, was educated in Chelsea but his first job was as a postman in Slough, his "union home". In 1992 he became the youngest general secretary in the history of the old postal workers' union. As a member of the Labour Party's national executive he has supported the Blair reforms and backed the abolition of Clause IV.



Chris Darke is responsible for some of the most conservative trade unionists in Britain. His leadership of the British Airline Pilots' Association could be seen as ironic given his past in the Communist Party and his present politics, described as "left of centre" Labour.

Mr Darke, aged 46, has proven himself as a union professional rather than a political radical in his 26 years as a full-time union officer. A fashionable dresser and an amateur pilot, Mr Darke began as an apprentice with GEC in Birmingham and became a design engineer at Lucas.



Law Adams, 66, is very much a traditional trade unionist wedded to the old-fashioned ethos of the Associated Society of Locomotives, Engineering and Firemen - of which he became General Secretary nearly three years ago. He started work as an engine cleaner when he was 15. In the 1950s he led a series of train drivers' strikes. He bitterly opposes the privatisation of British Rail, but believes fragmentation of the industry could help push up drivers' wages. A former Labour councillor, he was an outspoken critic of Tony Blair's campaign to abolish the party's Clause IV.

Three disputes, three union leaders with very different styles

service Acas. The union claims management reneged on a promise to reduce working time, and some members of the executive may argue for further action after the stoppage already scheduled for next Tuesday.

At the Royal Mail, talks con-

tinued ahead of today's meeting of the Communication Workers' Union executive, which is due to decide whether to intensify industrial action over planned productivity changes - particularly the issue of "team-working". Postal

services have already been disrupted by two 24-hour walkouts and some members of the executive are pressing for 48-hour strikes. But Alan Johnson, joint general secretary of the CWU, will argue for further contact with the Post Office.

The call for talks at British Airways came from Chris Darke, general secretary of the British Airline Pilots' Association, and is the first sign of hope in the dispute since the union announced a 90 per cent vote in favour of action. Mr Darke

said he had "positive suggestions" that he hoped would lead to progress. An airline spokesman said the company was pleased there would be a return to the negotiating table and that BA would "listen very carefully" to what Balpa had to say.

The union's initiative came after a meeting yesterday of 30 Balpa representatives. There has been little contact with management since the strike vote among the 3,000 pilots and other flight crew was announced.

The union had argued that

the company should offer an improvement in the 3.6 per cent package before talks could begin. However, Mr Darke said he had decided to take the initiative to break the impasse. "We have been disappointed and puzzled by the company's refusal to table any new offer. That is unfair to everyone, especially holidaymakers," he said.

"We have some positive suggestions to make to the company which we hope will enable them to move forward."

BA has argued that many of the pilots have not understood the company's true position, particularly at Gatwick.

The airline has put forward a two-year package with a 3.6 per cent increase in the first year followed by a rise of 0.5 per cent above the inflation rate next year. Since the strike-ballet result, BA has offered an additional 10 per cent payment to lower-paid crews at Gatwick.

Planting trees may worsen droughts

KAREN BAKKER

Government plans to double the amount of forest cover in England over the next 50 years may worsen droughts, scientists are warning. They have found that trees decrease the amount of rainfall reaching rivers, reservoirs and underground aquifers.

Leaves on the trees intercept rainfall before it hits the ground, allowing it to evaporate back into the atmosphere at much higher rates than from short vegetation. Just as clothes pegged out onto a line dry more quickly than those lying on the ground, tall trees with many leaves are more efficient evaporation surfaces than grass or crops.

Studies of upland evergreen forests by scientists at the Government's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology in Wallingford have found an increase in evaporation rates in forested areas of up to 100 per cent compared to treeless catchments. In some upland areas of Scotland, researchers have found this leads to a 20 per cent reduction in run off to reservoirs.

Now hydrologists are concerned about the impact on water supplies of the likely large increase in lowland woodlands over the next few decades. "Community forests" are being planted on the edge of big cities, a large new National Forest has begun to grow in the Midlands, "energy plantations" of coppiced woodland are being considered, and the advent of set-aside farmland has provided further opportunities for planting. These and other policies came together last autumn when the Government announced that it wanted a doubling of England's forest cover by 2045.

Most of the new trees in the lowlands are broad-leaved species which drop their leaves in autumn, so they evaporate less water through the winter than coniferous trees. But during summer dry spells these trees take up water from the soil

at far higher rates than the grassland and crops which they are replacing.

Recent research by the centre suggests that water use of some broad-leaved species may be significantly higher than previously thought. In one forest, recharge to the underground chalk aquifer was found to be reduced by 40 per cent, according to Dr Ian Calder, a hydrologist. "Planting forests now might significantly affect water resources in the long term, particularly if climate change becomes a reality," he says.

Few policy makers appear to have recognised the implications of the combined effects of tree planting and global warming. The most recent Department of Environment report on the impact of climate change in Britain, released last week, makes no mention of the implications of afforestation. And the Government's Environment Agency, which oversees water resources, has not approached the Forestry Commission.

Given the economic and aesthetic benefits of planting forests, any potential water shortages should be dealt with by an "emphasis on reducing leakage and reducing demand rather than altering vegetation," says Dr Tom Nisbet, a hydrologist at the commission. ■ Our national tree, the oak, is the hardest in the country, according to the latest Forestry Commission survey of tree condition. One in nine are missing at least half of the leaves of a tree in peak condition and just over two-thirds are missing at least a quarter. The oak, which makes up about 9 per cent of commercial tree species grown in the UK, is in distinctly worse condition than the other main commercial species: the Scots pine, the beech and the non-native commercial conifers, the Sitka and Norway spruces. Winter moths, frost damage, and a mysterious degenerative condition affecting oaks in the south and east of England in the early 1990s are to blame.

Paris fashion: The house founded with the New Look of 1947 now opens its doors to radical change



Farewell performance: Ferré being applauded by the models who showed his last collection for Dior



Candy wrap: a simple suit enlivened with a pink wrap at Dior's show in Paris yesterday Photographs: Sheridan Morley

Ferré takes last bow at Dior

TAMSIN BLANCHARD
Fashion Editor

The Italian designer Gianfranco Ferré showed his last haute couture collection for the House of Dior yesterday in Paris. His successor has yet to be announced, but the house that Christian Dior founded with his controversial New Look collection in 1947, looks set to be revamped in the style of Givenchy, where John Galiano has generated massive publicity and blown away the cobwebs. Dior and Givenchy are both owned by Louis Vuitton/Moët Hennessy.

The "giant haystack" designer was given a standing ovation by the audience, which included Mrs Chirac and Paloma Picasso. Mr Ferré took over from Marc Bohan, who took the job from Yves Saint Laurent in 1960. Saint Laurent was the designer Dior chose to succeed him shortly before his death in 1957.

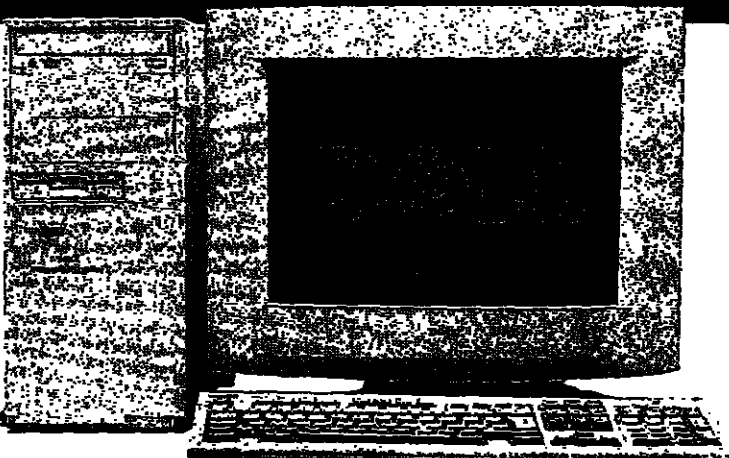
There are rumours that the American designer Marc Jacobs may take the post, but the doors must be wide open. Last season, the avant-garde mini-

malist designer Helmut Lang was rumoured to be taking over at Balenciaga and, in some ways, a fresh young name would put Dior back on track as the innovative house it once was. Our own Vivienne Westwood, with her flair for fashion history, could certainly be the woman for the job.

Ferré's final collection for Dior was on the theme of the Orient, with clothes for Indian princesses and an Arabian Scheherazade - a fantasy woman not far from the reality of the clients who may order a gold lace embroidered one-shoulder sari dress, or a fitted jacket encrusted in embroidery and heavy with gold lame.

The pieces most likely to sell were the simple fitted suits, a diamond striped trouser suit for evening, or a candy-pink column dress and mohair coat. The model Naomi Campbell was did not seem much enamoured of the clothes she was wearing, and made rapid passages down the catwalk, making it as difficult as possible for the photographers to snap her. Men's fashion, Section Two

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ITV looks to costume drama in ratings war

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

ITV is to take on the genre the BBC has made its own – costume drama – in an attempt to boost its ratings this autumn, it emerged yesterday.

It is to screen an adaptation of Jane Austen's *Emma*, by Andrew Davies, who wrote the recent adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* for the BBC. It will star Kate Beckinsale as the meddling but well-meaning heroine.

Mr Davies has also written ITV's other two landmark costume dramas for this autumn: a four-part adaptation of Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, starring *The Knave's* Alex Kingston, and an adaptation of Dennis Danvers' haunting love story, *Wilderness*.

The dramas will complement returning series, including *Soldier, Soldier*, *London's Burning*, *Taggart* and *Heartbeat*.

The controversial continuation of the *Poldark* story, filmed by HTV last year, will also hit the screens this autumn, despite the outcry at the decision not to employ Robin Ellis and Angarad Rees to recreate Ross Poldark, the Cornish mine owner, and his wife Demelza.



Challenge to the BBC: Kate Beckinsale in *Emma*

The pair played the lead roles in the hugely popular 1970s BBC series which attracted 15 million viewers weekly but they were dropped by HTV when salary negotiations failed. John Bove and Mel Martin were asked to take up the story of the final *Poldark* novels instead.

Meanwhile, ITV also confirmed long-standing rumours yesterday that a fourth episode of *Coronation Street* will go out at 7.30pm on Sundays from late November in a bid to bump up Sunday night ratings.

Marcus Plantin, the network controller, denied the extra episode would kill enthusiasm for the soap which regularly attracts 16 million viewers.

"Granada (which makes the programme) are handling the fourth episode with consummate care. There will be new characters and a new street. We will grow the *Coronation Street* family," he said.

"It is not just eking out what's already there. Within a very short time everyone will say 'Coronation Street on Sunday' hasn't it always been there? The *Street* is an institution, it is part and parcel of most people's lives and the decision was not taken lightly."

"With *Coronation Street*'s fourth episode we will devise a storyline which will peak on the Sunday night but viewers will have to wait for the denouement on the Monday."

Phil Redmond, whose production company makes *Brookside*, has long argued that all soap operas will eventually go to four days a week, despite concerns that it would mean too much strain for the stars and that the programmes would inevitably become weaker as a result.

Media, page 18



Poetry in emotion: Angela Gheorghiu and Roberto Alagna are newlyweds, which adds an extra frisson to their performances

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

Singing with love's sweet harmony

Married couples are enjoying a romantic renaissance. It is once more sexy to be legal.

Last week, Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman made several thousand teenage hearts beat faster as they snooched in London; and last night, opera's own dream team, Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu, appeared at Covent Garden together for the first time since their much publicised romance and marriage.

"To sing love duets with the person you love is *magnifique*," said Alagna before the performance in a line marketing departments fantasise about. His

FIRST NIGHT

La Traviata
Royal Opera House,
Covent Garden

spouse added: "When we are together on stage, it is a reflection of our life and an extension of it which we live out on stage."

Throw in the fact that both are young and attractive, that Alagna has been described as "the fourth tenor" and that

Gheorghiu is one of the most acclaimed new sopranos, and this was a very hot ticket indeed.

Theirs was not, it has to be said, quite the *Romeo and Juliet*-style story it has been painted. They were married to other people when they met four years ago in *La Bohème* at Covent Garden.

Alagna's wife tragically died of a brain tumour two years ago, leaving him with a young daughter, and Gheorghiu divorced her Romanian husband.

But their memories of those rehearsals four years ago added to the anticipation of seeing them on stage last night.

Alagna, 32, born in France of Sicilian parents, recalled: "In my mind – because of the sound I was hearing – she had to be fat. I certainly didn't expect her to be beautiful."

"She was cute, young and lovely. It was love at first sight. As I took Angela's hand in mine, I felt an actual shock ... [After that] I felt so jealous each time I'd read that she was singing with someone else."

Gheorghiu recalled that "when he burst into the rehearsal room at Covent Garden, the atmosphere changed. It was so exciting. Like electricity."

In the poignant and tragic

love story of *La Traviata*, it would be hard not to generate any romantic sparks. But undoubtedly this pairing did exude a genuine excitement in their scenes together.

Alagna's tender and emotionally vulnerable tenor voice is not yet in the class of the big three, but it is compelling.

Gheorghiu has a serenity in her style that is equally attractive. And for once there was acting to match. This couple did indeed appear enraptured with one another, but then, perhaps that wasn't acting at all.

David Lister

Branson puts new spin on records business

Businessman Richard Branson is setting up a new record label, four years after he sold the original Virgin Records for £560m.

The company, provisionally called V2, is already looking for acts to sign. Initially it will concentrate on what Mr Branson referred to as "quality rock", although it may later diversify into classical music.

Heading V2 is Jeremy Pearce, the former chief of Sony's division for foreign and independent bands, where he handled bands including Oasis and Suede. The official launch will be made when the company announces its first signing, probably in the autumn.

Virgin spokeswoman Mo Foster said Mr Branson had badly missed the music business, which had formed the cornerstone of his business empire.

Under the terms of the deal with EMI, the buyers of Virgin Records, he had not been allowed to set up a new label until now and he had plunged back into the industry as soon as the exclusion clause expired.

"I think he has been missing the business terribly. When he sold Virgin Records he went to the staff to tell them about the decision and he left in tears," she said. "That doesn't normally happen. He is obviously very keen to be getting back into it."

Virgin Records was sold to al-

low Branson to concentrate on his other interests, which now include Virgin Atlantic, Virgin Megastores, Virgin Radio and Virgin Cinemas.

He founded the record label in 1970 and despite, or perhaps because of, being unmusical, made a splash with his 1977 signing, the Sex Pistols, who had been rejected by the more established record companies – including, ironically, EMI.

If the new company, which is not entitled to use the word Virgin in its title, follows in the footsteps of its predecessor, it will soon become a major player in the pop industry.

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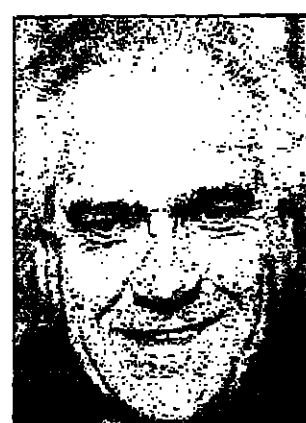
24/11/05



'This hero worship is very much misplaced' – **John Carlisle MP**, on the BBC screening of the Free Nelson Mandela concert in 1990



'The ANC is a typical terrorist organisation ... Anyone who thinks it is going to run the government in South Africa is living in cloud-cuckoo land' – **Margaret Thatcher**, 1987



'How much longer will the Prime Minister allow herself to be kicked in the face by this black terrorist' – **Terry Dicks MP**, mid-1980s



'Nelson Mandela should be shot' – **Teddy Taylor MP**, mid-1980s

From 'terrorist' to tea with the Queen

ANTHONY BEVINS
Political Editor
and MICHAEL STREETER

The fuss that Parliament is to make over Nelson Mandela this week will mark a stark contrast with the 20-year Commons silence that followed his imprisonment in 1962.

On Thursday, the President of South Africa is to be accorded the rare honour of addressing both Houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall, when ministers, MPs and peers

Nelson Mandela: Once vilified by the Government, he will be acclaimed as a hero this week

will gather to pay homage to a world statesman.

But an *Independent* survey of Commons *Hansard* records suggests that even in the immediate aftermath of his imprisonment, Mr Mandela's name was not uttered in the chamber.

Hansard indices, which cover speeches, statements and oral questions and answers in the Commons, as well as written questions and answers, sug-

gest that the first time Nelson Mandela's name was mentioned in the House was on 9 March 1983, in a question from Labour MP Ken Eastham.

In his autobiography, *Conquest of Liberty*, former Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe says that even as late as October 1987, at a press conference following the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Vancouver, Mrs

Thatcher was quick to dismiss the African National Congress as "a typical terrorist organisation". Sir Geoffrey added sadly: "Absolutism still held sway."

But Mrs Thatcher was expressing a common view on the right of the Tory party.

In the mid-1980s, Conservative backbench MP Teddy Taylor said: "Nelson Mandela should be shot" – though he later claimed it was meant jokingly.

"Unfortunately, I do still regard him as an ex-terrorist," he said two years ago.

In 1990, when Mr Mandela declined to meet Mrs Thatcher on a trip to London, Conservative MP Terry Dicks asked:

"How much longer will the Prime Minister allow herself to be kicked in the face by this black terrorist?"

John Carlisle, Tory MP for Luton North, was furious at the

BBC's screening of the 1990 Mandela concert in London.

"The BBC have just gone bananas over this and seem to be joining those who are making Mandela out to be a Christ-like figure," Mr Carlisle said.

"Many will remember his record and the record of his wife as they take the podium. This hero worship is misplaced."

That same year, another Tory MP, Andrew Hunter, now chair-

man of the Conservative backbench committee on Northern Ireland, called for an investigation into alleged secret links between Mr Mandela's ANC and the IRA.

Labour frontbencher Brian Wilson yesterday challenged John Bercow, Conservative parliamentary candidate for Buckingham and former political adviser to Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for Na-

tional Heritage, to offer regret for the abuse that had been heaped on Mr Mandela by the Federation of Conservative Students when he was its chairman.

He said FCS conferences had been littered with slogans like "Hang Nelson Mandela", and Mr Wilson added: "Mr Bercow must now make it clear that he deeply regrets the behaviour of FCS members."

"Silence would only show that we've still got the same old Tories with the same old story of intolerance and bigotry."

Freedom fighters take up free trade

In advance of this week's visit to London by Nelson Mandela, there was a demonstration next to the huge bust of the South African president on London's South Bank. The participants, some in traditional South African costume, handed out South African oranges before going to Downing Street to hand in a petition.

Ten years ago the demonstrators would have been from the Anti-Apartheid Movement, trying to shame Britons into boycotting South African oranges. Now it is the movement's successor, Action for Southern Africa (Acta), trying to shame the European Union into dropping its attempts to block exports of South African produce. "It's ironic, I know," said Acta's director, Ben Jackson, "but trade will be the biggest issue during President Mandela's visit."

The symbolism of Mr Mandela's state visit to Britain is immense: today apartheid's most prominent political prisoner, once reviled by British government leaders, will be received with 21-gun salutes and will ride in a state carriage down the Mall with the Queen. But behind the scenes in both Britain and France, where Mr Mandela will make another state visit, he will be demanding that the EU honour its promises to help the whole of southern Africa to overcome the economic aftermath of apartheid.

Two years after the euphoria of South Africa's first free elec-

The Anti-Apartheid lobby has changed tack, writes **Raymond Whitaker**

tions, the EU has failed to agree on a proposal, backed by Britain, for the creation of a free trade area with South Africa. Despite a growing trade surplus with South Africa, Germany is leading efforts to exclude nearly 40 per cent of South African farm exports – including oranges, tinned fruit and wine – from talks on better market access. Acta argues that the EU, South Africa's most important export market, treats its products little differently than when it was an international pariah.

It was easier to rally the British public, however, when Mr Mandela was imprisoned on Robben Island and apartheid was at its worst. Membership of the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) peaked around 35,000 to 30,000 in the late 1980s, when there was a permanent vigil on the pavement outside South Africa House and the giants of rock music fell over themselves to take part in the Mandela birthday concert at Wembley in 1988, bringing an influx of younger people.

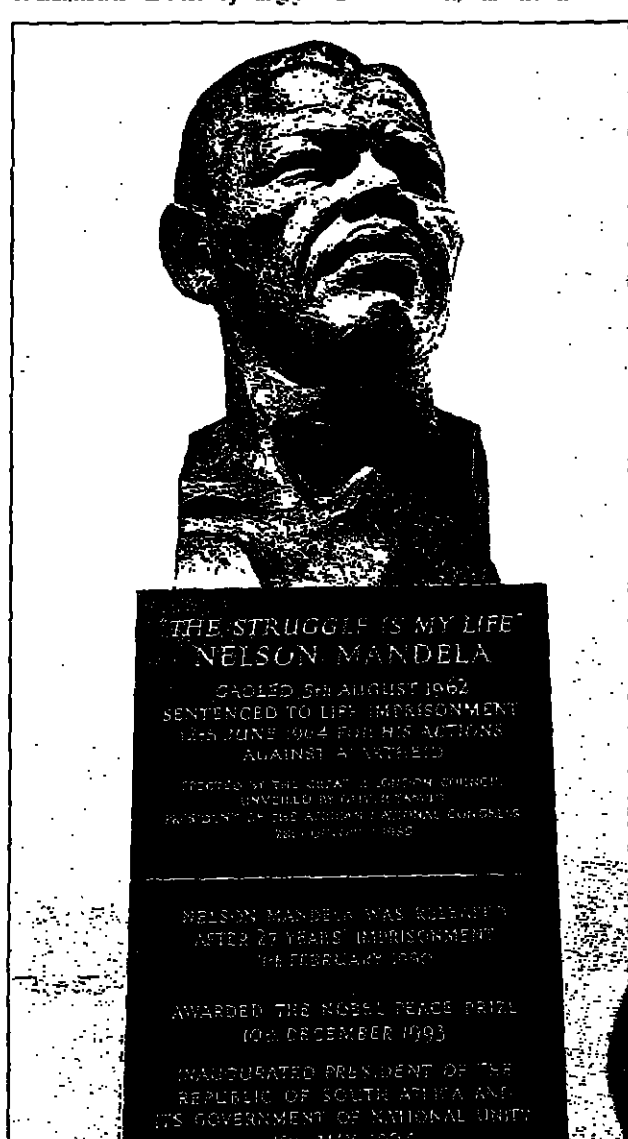
The vigil came to an end in February 1990, when Mr Mandela walked out of prison after 27 years. In October 1994 the AAM, its work done, disbanded after 35 years and transformed itself into Acta, which now has about 5,000 individual members. "There has been a lot

of continuity," said Mr Jackson. "Trade unions, which were always very active in the AAM, have been very good about reaffiliating to Acta, which was not an automatic process."

The AAM's headquarters in north London, which suffered a firebomb attack by South African agents in the early 1980s, are now closed. Acta took over the nearby offices of the African National Congress – also the target of a bomb attack – following the ANC's transformation from an exile guerrilla movement into South Africa's governing party. But Acta's patron is Bishop Trevor Huddleston, who founded the AAM in 1959 with Julius Nyerere, then President of Tanzania.

Dorothy Robinson, the founding executive secretary of the movement, was helping Acta yesterday to prepare for Mr Mandela's visit. "At first the emphasis was on boycotting South African goods," she said, "but after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960 our work multiplied. Apart from seeking international sanctions and the release of political prisoners, we had to campaign to save Mr Mandela from being executed for treason."

By the late 1960s the movement was beginning to realise that it was in for a long haul, said Ms Robinson. It had little en-



GLC hero: Mandela's bust on the South Bank

couragement in the 1970s, when repression tightened and South Africa mounted military attacks on its neighbours to keep the guerrilla movements at bay. Only in the 1980s did the sanc-

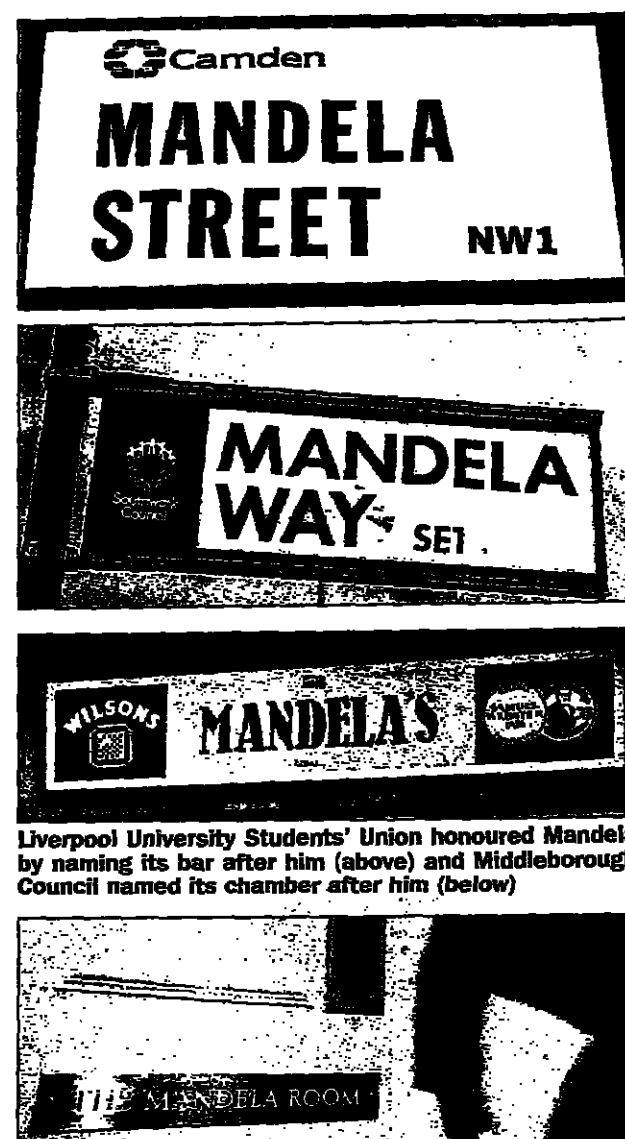
tions campaign begin to bear fruit – and now, in the mid-1990s, Acta is wrestling with the vital but considerably less dramatic detail of free trade.

The organisation has been

given a grant of £80,000 from South Africa to organise and catalogue the AAM's archives, which will be housed in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Is there still a warehouse full of

"Free Mandela" T-shirts somewhere? "There is some merchandise left over, which we sell off from time to time to raise money," said Mr Jackson with a laugh. "The other day we had

some former freedom fighters from Namibia over who are now MPs. One of them asked me for a 'Free Mandela' mug to replace one he had broken. I gave him two."



Liverpool University Students' Union honoured Mandela by naming its bar after him (above) and Middleborough Council named its chamber after him (below)

None of the councils and universities which named streets, conference rooms and even a student bar after Nelson Mandela probably ever imagined the day when he would arrive in Britain as president of his country. At the time the Mandela name carried the status of a myth. Nobody had seen him since the 1960s, and the British taboo on creating memorials to living politicians hardly seemed applicable. Yet here he is. Mr Mandela's state visit, however, is simply likely to enhance his position as a secular saint, a living symbol of South Africa's redemption from apartheid, after whom it is entirely appropriate to dignify municipal and educational facilities. But there is an irony here: in South Africa the predicted rush to attach his name to every avenue and airport formerly entitled after the heroes of white supremacy has not materialised. Mr Mandela has shown admirable reluctance to allow this – unlike Zimbabwe, for example, where the main street of every city and town is now named after President Robert Mugabe.

Raymond Whitaker

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international

Corsican bomb raises spectre of lawlessness

Bastia — They named a street after Sicily's assassinated anti-mafia judge, Giovanni Falcone, in this Corsican port at the weekend. In the full glare of the midday sun, with the heat radiating off the white and sandy stone of the new estate and the blue-green sea glistening far below, the mayor of Bastia unveiled the new street sign with a determined swish of southern panache: Rue du Juge Falcone.

It was a simple ceremony, watched by perhaps 150 people and a few dozen more from the windows and balconies of their new flats. There were some well-chosen words from the mayor of Bastia, Emile Zeccarelli, considerably more words from the mayor of Palermo, and a short epilogue from the prefect of northern Corsica, then the anthems of Italy and France, in their longer versions.

But the terrible irony of the ceremony escaped no one, for it came at the end of a week that began with a car-bomb explosion in the very heart of Bastia. It brought home to Corsicans the risk that their island, too, could descend into Sicilian-style lawlessness. The bomb in Bastia had killed one man, Pierre-Louis Lorenzi, a member of the political wing of the

Mary Dejevsky reports on an attack that reveals more than a 'vendetta'

biggest Corsican nationalist movement; seriously injured Charles Pieri, the leader of the same group, and hurt another 14 other people who just happened to be in the vicinity.

Apart from the extent of the injuries, what shocked was the fact that the bomb had been timed to go off in broad daylight, in the centre of the city, in full view of everyone. In Corsica, people have grown used to the sort of sporadic violence that lurks in dark corners, at night, and can be dismissed as personal vendetta or petty delinquency next day. Bastia's bomb seemed like an open challenge.

In his speech on Saturday, the mayor, who had come straight from an emergency meeting of his left-wing coalition's city councillors, insisted that the only way to fight organised crime and terrorism was through "democratic institutions and legality". The prefect, looking grave and northern, in sombre suit and tie, spoke of the need to foster respect for the law, and stood extra-straight and solemn through the national anthems. The

choice of the long forms of the national anthems, — the *Marseillaise* punctuated with mock-cannon fire — like the proliferation of French and Italian flags, and the shiny "Republique Française" badges on every lamppost, seemed to say one thing: "The State is still in charge here."

The message from Bastia as a whole, however, is more ambiguous. On the face of it, this city of pastel stone on the island's north-east coast, differs little from any other Mediterranean port except in the luxuriance of its vegetation. The palms and cypresses, pines and chestnuts, enlivened by banks of red and white oleanders, hide all but the tiled roofs of apartment blocks and villas.

There is a working harbour for the giant ferries from Marseilles and Livorno, a recently built marina, and the old port — ancient focus of the city — with its baroque church of St John the Baptist, looking out on the dozens of fishing and sailing boats in the harbour.

For France, though, even for Mediterranean France, Bastia



Flattering to deceive: Despite its picture-pretty old port, Bastia looks not just poor but misgoverned

Photograph: Robert Harding

looks not just southern, and not just poor, but misgoverned. There are as many expensive German and Japanese cars as in Paris, but the city itself is clearly failing to thrive.

The picture-pretty old port, surrounded by faded Italianate

palazzos and warehouses, would be an asset to any town with ambitions as a tourist centre, but it is decrepit to the point where three bomb-damaged shopfronts are not immediately apparent. Only the charring and a ragged Corsican flag give

away where the bomb exploded. Almost a week later, jagged glass is still uncollected and unreplaced. Letters still lie in the hallway of the shop that served as the offices of Pieri's recently formed security company.

The signs of state power and the resistance to it are everywhere. Entering the city from the north, the first big building, being extended to more than double its present size, is the *gendarmerie*. Then the town hall, with a high fence, police guards, and tricolour. The prefecture — a big, modern edifice in the new, upper city — has no board outside; its only form of identification is the bus stop outside, labelled "prefecture" in tiny letters. The railings are 10ft high, and spiked; abundant barbed wire fills any gaps.

Down in the older part of town, the central post office is covered in nationalist graffiti, as though it has been abandoned to their cause. Any other blank wall is either covered in "Free Corsica" slogans, or evidence of

clumsy recent painting. There are far fewer cash-dispensing machines than there would be in a city of similar size on the mainland, and none on the peninsula north of Bastia. Apparently, they get blown up. The absence of litter-bins is equally telling. In the streets and cafes it is the gruff Italian-sound of the Corsican language that you hear, not French.

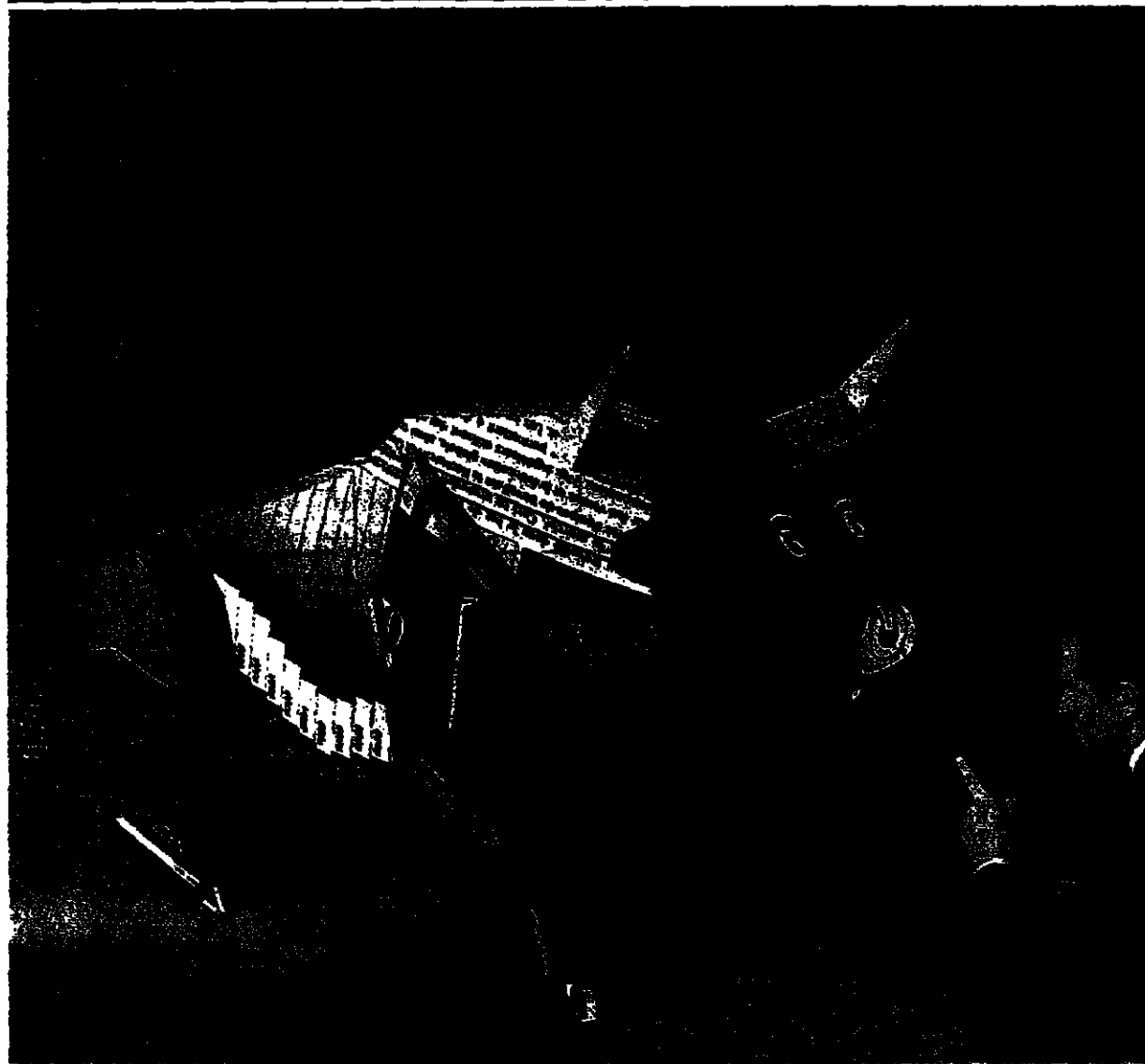
Twenty kilometres to the south lies the village of Lucciana, a collection of stone houses and a church perched on a hillside over a ravine. Lucciana's mayor was murdered two years ago, the first and so far only elected representative to have been killed in 20 years of violence.

A steep holding wall above the main road is daubed with tributes to the FLNC — the military wing of Pieri and Lorenzi's Corsican movement — and its martyrs. Past the village proper, the road is lined with family vaults, ornate and flower-strewn, behind padlocks and railings.

A little further on, the Luc-

ciana cemetery, clustered round a big, ruined church, is arranged on terraces shaded by cypresses and overlooking the sea. The sickly scent of hundreds of flowers is overpowering. Piled up by a family vault on the left, impossible to miss, are dozens of wreaths, bouquets and plaques, each with a message of condolence. The night shift at the hospital where he died sent a wreath, regretting they could not save him. But in pride of place stands the wreath from the terrorist group, the FLNC.

In Bastia, everyone, from the mayor down, fears a revenge attack for Lorenzi's death, but still no one seems to know who planted the bomb, or why. For once, though, the authorities are looking beyond the standard explanation — that it's just in the Corsican tradition of vendettas — and taking seriously the threat to law and order. As the mayor and the prefect both implied in their tributes this weekend, however, Corsica is still waiting for its Judge Falcone.



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HEWLETT-PACKARD

Socialist rebels threaten Gonzalez

Leaders of the Spanish Socialist Party, narrowly defeated in the general elections last March, are facing an incipient rebellion in the ranks, writes Elizabeth Nash.

Regional barons and disaffected former ministers have been urging that a special congress be called to replace the existing leadership, including Felipe Gonzalez as party leader. The mutiny was sparked by

two recent corruption scandals within the party. In the first, the regional leader in Navarra quit after being accused of siphoning off party funds into his private Swiss bank account.

In the second, an Andalusian party boss was suspended on suspicion of taking money for granting the right-wing mayor of Marbella, Jesus Gil y Gil, unauthorised building permission. The party was initially re-

lieved after it prevented prevented the conservative Popular Party from winning an outright majority at the polls in March.

But the party has made a feeble opposition debut. Mr Gonzalez said that he wanted to allow Jose Maria Aznar time to establish himself as Prime Minister, and said that he would take a political holiday until September.

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'Hawk' clips Israeli PM's wings

PATRICK COCKBURN
Jerusalem

It is Benjamin Netanyahu's biggest defeat since he became Prime Minister. As he flew off to Washington yesterday the Israeli parliament was creating a custom-made ministry for General Ariel Sharon, the leader of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, whom Mr Netanyahu has tried and failed to keep out of his cabinet as "a persistent dissident".

In the aftermath of his election victory five weeks ago, it must all have looked easy. Mr Netanyahu had won largely thanks to General Sharon's success in uniting the right and

cultivating religious leaders. But the new Prime Minister showed no enthusiasm for giving a government job to his former chief lieutenant.

What Mr Netanyahu may not have known is that his distrust of General Sharon was only equalled by General Sharon's distrust of him. The general had taken out an insurance policy in the shape of a mutual assistance pact with David Levy, the Foreign Minister, who twice threatened to resign unless General Sharon became a minister.

In the end, Mr Netanyahu's attempt to treat General Sharon like an Israeli Falstaff, whom the 68-year-old hero of

the far right vaguely resembles – ended in humiliation for the Prime Minister. As Mr Netanyahu explained the necessity of creating a new Ministry of National Infrastructure from the podium of the Knesset yesterday he smiled ingratiatingly at General Sharon, who sat staring grumpily ahead.

The dispute was not about ideology, though General Sharon's inclusion in the cabinet will make it more difficult for Mr Netanyahu to show any flexibility towards the Palestinians. Sacked as Defence Minister in 1982 after the massacre of Palestinians at Sabra and Chatila in Beirut, General Sharon calls Yasser Arafat, the

Palestine Liberation Organisation leader, a "war criminal".

Mr Netanyahu is good at shrugging off setbacks. Yesterday he played down the row over General Sharon saying: "Dramatisation adds spice to life." But his attempt to marginalise his old enemies in the Likud party, like Dan Meridor at Finance and David Levy at the Foreign Ministry, has failed. He now faces a cabinet filled with his enemies.

Since he is directly elected, Mr Netanyahu cannot be deposed, but his efforts to remodel the Israeli Prime Minister's Office along the lines of the White House are not going well. Even the attempt to pro-

moté his wife Sara as First Lady is foundering after she was denounced by two of her former nannies for mistreating them.

Personally and politically, Mr Netanyahu, who meets President Clinton today, remains a mystery to Israelis. On policy, he repeats his campaign theme that he will provide greater security, but without making significant concessions to Arab or Palestinian demands. In the rest of the Middle East this looks like the end of the peace-for-land formula which underlies the Oslo peace agreements. Mr Netanyahu, for his part, blandly says: "What is happening is that the Arabs are adapting – the Palestinians, the

Syrians and others – adapting to the new reality."

Mr Netanyahu is expected to tell President Clinton that Mr Levy will meet Mr Arafat and he will then meet him himself. The Israeli press says he is unlikely to spell out Israeli intentions on withdrawal from most of Hebron or the future of Orient House, the PLO headquarters in East Jerusalem.

But in a US election year, President Clinton, who did all he could to keep Shimon Peres as Israeli premier, will be eager to announce all is well with his Middle East policy. Overall, Mr Netanyahu should have an easier ride than he has had in Israel. *Essay, page 14*

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Turkey's political secularism was shattered yesterday when the Prime Minister, Necmettin Erbakan, crowned his marathon bid for power by narrowly winning a vote of confidence in Parliament. MPs voted narrowly to approve Mr Erbakan's coalition with the pro-Western conservative True Path Party of Tansu Ciller, rallying Islamist control of the government for the first time in the 73 years of the Turkish republic and reversing a decades-old taboo. "A new era has begun in Turkey," Mr Erbakan said. "We will work day and night with the spirit of worship." The moment of triumph for Mr Erbakan, 70, and his Welfare Party followed months of manoeuvres that forced the secular elite to cede the Islamists a permanent place at Turkey's political table. *Reuter - Ankara*

Ecuador's populist candidate beat a right-wing free market reformer in Ecuador's presidential run-off election on Sunday. Abdala Bucaram, a self-proclaimed saviour of the poor and opponent of the establishment, facing a minority in the new Congress, immediately held out an olive branch to foes and hope to a business community that feared he might derail economic reforms. Mr Bucaram, a lawyer from the centre-left Roldosista Party who failed in two previous presidential attempts, helped win this third bid by captivating the poor with his fiery attacks on the reforms that have yet to benefit many, and on a discredited political establishment. A 44-year-old former athlete, he is known as "The Crazy One" for his flamboyant personality. He donned a Batman suit in a previous campaign and accused local banks of being linked to Colombian drug cartels and the CIA. *Reuter - Quito*

Pressure has increased on Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader indicted as a war criminal, to step down after the international community threatened to disqualify his party from Bosnian elections. And prosecutors at the Yugoslavia war crimes tribunal in The Hague urged major powers to arrest Mr Karadzic and his military commander, General Ratko Mladic, and hand them over to stand trial for genocide. The call came as UN investigators began to unearth mass graves of massacre victims, starting with Muslims killed in the conquest of Srebrenica a year ago. *Reuter - Sarajevo*

Ukraine's civilian defence minister was dismissed by the president, Leonid Kuchma, yesterday. Valery Shmarov was the sole civilian defence minister in the former Soviet Union outside the Baltic states. A statement from Mr Kuchma's office said Mr Shmarov had been "freed from his duties in connection with his request to that effect". He had been under fire from both nationalists and left-wingers for building a close relationship with Nato. *Reuter - Kiev*

Storms have claimed 17 lives in South Africa, police said, after melting snow revealed three bodies on the streets of towns yesterday. They said eight people had died of exposure while nine suffocated as they huddled around coal fires burning in unventilated shacks. Two days of snowfalls over wide parts of the country blocked major roads, stranded motorists and trapped hikers and climbers. Nationally, the weather bureau said the snowfalls were the worst since June 1964. Some of the heaviest falls occurred in the high-lying eastern part of Free State province, blocking the main artery from Johannesburg to Durban. *Reuter - Johannesburg*

Pilgrims and sightseers are flocking to a small country church in South Australia after its priest described an image of the Virgin Mary and child on the altar wall. "When it first appeared I shared it with people in the congregation and they said, 'well, yes, if you squint your eyes, think good thoughts, maybe... maybe'," the Rev Andrew Nutter said yesterday. "But now everybody's coming in. Catholics, secular humanists, atheists, doubters, people who have no time for the church, and people who are faithful, see it." *Reuter - Adelaide*

French admit ex-minister's aides bugged

BERNARD EDINGER
Reuter

Paris — The French defence ministry confirmed yesterday that it had ordered wire-taps on two senior aides to former defence minister François Léotard for unspecified "national security" reasons.

The statement was made after *Le Monde* reported that the surveillance was aimed at discovering whether cash from Saudi arms sales had been diverted to former prime minister Edouard Balladur's presidential campaign.

The disclosure gave a new dimension to scandals over alleged illegal political funding, including that of President Jacques Chirac's Gaullist party.

Prime Minister Alain Juppé and a special commission had approved the wire-taps, as required by law, it said. The commission which oversees wire-taps, headed by a member of France's highest administrative court, said the telephone interceptions were authorised within legal guidelines "which unambiguously exclude any political motives".

Mr Léotard was a senior organiser of Balladur's unsuc-

cessful campaign for the 1995 presidential election, in which Chirac, a fellow Gaullist, defeated him. *Le Monde* said in a front-page story that Chirac's entourage had suspected that in 1993 and 1994, commissions on arms sales to Saudi Arabia, worth hundreds of millions of dollars, had gone to Balladur and his supporters.

Le Monde said at least three officials had been subject to wire-taps. It identified them as François Lepine, now regional prefect of the Franche-Comte area of eastern France, Patrice Molle, currently deputy chief of Léotard's personal staff, and Colonel Louis-Pierre Dillais.

Mr Dillais, an intelligence specialist in Mr Léotard's private office, is reported to have coordinated the sinking of the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* in New Zealand in 1985. *Le Monde* said Mr Léotard's successor, Charles Millon, ordered the wire-taps after Chirac appointed him to succeed Léotard.

Mr Léotard commented: "I urge the prime minister to explain this practice, which is both astonishing and unjust towards military men or senior officials who have served their country honourably."



Residents forced to flee their homes in Xuanzhou, Anhui. Photograph: Reuter

Floods kill more than 400 in China

Peking (Reuter) — Southern China mopped up yesterday after some of the worst floods in a century killed more than 400 people, with farmers replanting crops and troops buttressing river embankments.

With the death toll at least 405 in six provinces and expected to rise as more bodies were dug out from landslides or found in collapsed homes, officials were on alert for more storms as the annual typhoon season neared.

Workers building the world's biggest water control project, the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze river, took precautions in case of flooding and opened sluices to reduce the water level, state television said.

"Crops have suffered some serious damage and in some areas are still swamped by water," said an official of the Chinese Red Cross. "There will be some partial grain shortages in disaster areas in the next one or two months and we are planning to transport grain to those areas."

Officials estimated damage from floods that have hit the provinces of Hubei, Guizhou, Zhejiang, Anhui, Jiangxi and Guangxi at over \$2bn with 3.3 million acres and 20 million people affected.

LA gears up for computer-road

TIM CORNWELL
Los Angeles

Drivers on a stretch of freeway outside the coastal city of San Diego next summer will not speed and if they drive drunk, it may not much matter. For California, fittingly enough, is to be the venue of an experiment that may truly revolutionise the culture of the car.

Engineers broke ground this week for an ambitious practical test of the so-called driverless freeway. By August 1997, it is planned, cars equipped with sensors to pick up signals from magnetic spikes in the roadway will drive by themselves along a 7.8-mile stretch of Interstate 15 – and turn off, hopefully, at the right exit.

"There are going to be com-

plications to work out, but this is the future of transportation," said Lynn Barton, San Diego coordinator for the consortium of government agencies, car companies and private experts involved in the first experiment of its kind in the world.

The car phone has already lowered the blood pressure of drivers stuck in jams on California's roads. Earlier this year Los Angeles' first double-decker freeway opened, with a high-speed car pool lane for environmentally responsible commuters. But the San Diego project conjures a vision of commuters being conveyed rapidly and safely along so-called smart roads while they read the paper or look at the view. Take the driver out of the equation, transport experts say, and you remove the

90 per cent of crashes blamed on human error.

Back in 1991 the United States Congress passed the Intermodal Transportation Act, aimed at developing a viable automated freeway system by 2002, and providing the bulk of \$200m (£130m) in financing to do it. Governor Pete Wilson put up \$5m in state funding to encourage them to choose a Californian venue. A single lane of Interstate 15 will be used, with engineers working at night to bury the three-inch spikes in the asphalt about one yard apart. Cameras and radar units mounted in the cars will enable them to move in close convoys and even avoid road debris.

Crowded freeways display classic characteristics of chaos theory – at a critical density, a

single driver slowing causes a ripple effect that can create a tailback miles long. The smart cars, by contrast, would communicate their moves by radio.

The question remains whether passengers will trust their lives to a computer. The cars will stay strictly within the speed limit, Mr Barton said. That may be a disappointment for drivers in the state, who on the rare occasions when traffic is clear like to put their foot down.

Computers presumably will be programmed to resist road rage, and the urge to lead police officers on 100mph chases. That alone could save lives. Between 1993 and 1995, a record 47 people were killed and nearly 2,000 injured in police pursuits in Southern California.

Coke and apple pie, but this Fourth of July is far from the real thing

SAIGON DAYS

There was a real live Uncle Sam, a 20-ft high inflatable Coca Cola bottle, a painting of Mount Rushmore, and more apple pie than anyone could eat, but this was no ordinary Fourth of July party. For a start, it was several days late (something to do with the government licences, someone said). Second, the weather was tropically humid (instead of the traditional sharply creased trousers, Uncle Sam wore a pair of dinky striped-and-striped shorts). And third, this was not the United States at all. Welcome to American Independence Day, in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Historical ironies don't come much sharper than this: a celebration of US bounty and democracy in Saigon, the city whose very name epitomises modern America's greatest humiliation. But 21 years after the communist victory, when helicopters carried the last of the ex-pats from the roof of the US Embassy, here they were again. There were rock'n'roll bands, a tug-of-war, and the Dunk Tub into which luminaries of the local US-Vietnamese community could be plunged with a well-aimed rubber ball. Up on the stage, Uncle Sam si-

lenced the band, and reeled off the list of sponsors: IBM, Chrysler, Jeep, Citibank, Mobil Oil, United Airlines, with special thanks to Baskin Robbins ice cream and Coke "our beverage supplier". "You really never been to a Fourth of July party before?" I was asked by Linda, whose husband works for a management consultancy. "We better get a beer and a burger down you, right now."

Beverage in hand, I waited by the Dunk Tub for Michael Scown, attorney-at-law, and president of the American Chamber of Commerce of Vietnam. About this, as about much else, Vietnam's Americans have to be careful. The Communist Party, without whose approval no organisation can officially exist, has yet to give its final seal of approval to the Chamber – members cautiously refer to it as "AmCham proposed". "We're like the Hell's Angels," Mr Scown explained. "When we first started out we weren't allowed to meet, but we just stuck at it. I pleaded a lot, and eventually the licences came through for this event."

Licences are required for music, food, and dancing, and Michael had to give a personal undertaking that the festivities would contain no political content.

"So I want it to be on the record that this is not a speech, but a toast," he cautioned the crowd later in the evening. "In memory of that day in Philadelphia in 1776, and that small group of people who dedicated themselves to free trade, free religion and representative government."

Politics or not, these are still qualities noticeably lacking in Vietnamese society. Since Bill Clinton lifted the trade embargo on Vietnam in 1994, 2,500 Americans have found their way to Ho Chi Minh City, as Saigon is now officially called. At the Fourth of July every one of the celebrants had their own story of corruption – the routine bribes and backhanders, the labyrinthine layers of bureaucracy. "We pre-censor rather than post-censor," said the Australian publisher of Vietnam's leading English language business journal, and even this does

not always work. For the July issue, the magazine had prepared a celebratory pull-out bearing the names and photographs of the new politburo. Then, on the first day of the Congress, one of the nominees died. "We had to pulp the lot, orders of the Prime Minister's office – 28,500 copies, all because of that dead bastard."

Todd, a 55-year-old Vietnam War vet turned tractor executive recounted the time he found himself in a Hanoi bar with nine Vietnamese contemporaries. "They ask me what I do," he said, "and I never lie about it. So it turned out that while I'd been flying F-4s off the aircraft carriers, these boys had all been MiG pilots. We got so drunk together, by the end of the evening I had them on stage singing the first four verses of the Star Spangled Banner. That's the thing about the Vietnamese: they love Americans."

"We wanted to have a fireworks display, because it's so much a part of the Fourth of July back in the States," said Mr Scown. "But they didn't like the symbolism – Americans firing rockets over Saigon. I guess you can see the point."

Richard Lloyd Parry

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A. G. Ogston

Alexander George ("Sandy") Ogston had a gentle but critical mind. He conveyed to his Oxford undergraduate students, of whom I was one, the need to keep in mind a simple question that is still relevant after half a century: "Is the conclusion sensible?" or, as he would have put it, "Is it thermodynamically reasonable?"

This need for things to make sense is probably why Sandy Ogston was able to solve a theoretical biochemical problem of considerable interest at the time in the 1940s when the metabolic pathways of living organisms were being worked out by Sir Hans Krebs and others.

Several chemical steps had been considered and rejected by other investigators because they required an apparent impossibility - the paradoxical formation of only one of two equally likely asymmetric products from a symmetrical precursor. In the summer of 1948 Ogston convincingly argued in a scientific paper of fewer than 400 words that the paradox disappears if the symmetrical precursor is attached to its relevant enzyme at three points.

This three-point attachment hypothesis was widely accepted (Krebs devoted almost the whole of a chapter of his autobiography to Ogston's "penetrating theoretical analysis" in this matter), and was a factor in Ogston's election to the Royal Society in 1955. Typically, Ogston was somewhat slightly embarrassed by the importance others placed on this work, because, as he would diffidently explain, the idea only took him a few moments to conceptualise.

Born in 1911, Sandy Ogston was educated at Eton and at Balliol College, Oxford, where he was a Brackenbury Scholar and gained a First in Chemistry in 1933. After a brief time as a Freedom Research Fellow at the London Hospital studying blood proteins, he was awarded his DPhil (Oxon) in 1937, and began what was to become

a period of over 20 years as a Fellow of his old college, tutoring in Physiology and lecturing in the Department of Biochemistry.

During the Second World War he was a member of the Ministry of Supply Research Team (1939-43) and of the Inter-Service Research Bureau (1943-44), where his physical chemical skills were used in attempts to develop methods of inactivating some of the awful poison gases used in the First World War.

After the war, Ogston resumed his academic studies, which seemed always to be characterised by his ability to arrive at unexpectedly simple solutions to difficult problems. Thus the solution of a complex anomaly, observed in 1935 (while at the London Hospital) when blood proteins were centrifuged, was shown 10 years later by Ogston and his student J.P. Johnston to be due to a predictable change in the concentrations of moving particles when they are slowed down by their surroundings. This Johnston-Ogston effect is of such generality that the same principles can predict the changes in the spacing of cars as they pass along a road with zones having different speed restrictions.

Another of Ogston's elegantly simple solutions to complex problems, in this case

related to the strange behaviour of mixtures of proteins and long chain carbohydrates, subsequently proved relevant to the permeability of paper and gels, and even to the growth of roots.

In 1960, Ogston began what he sometimes described as the period of his life devoted mainly to helping others carry out their academic vocations, already presaged by his serving from 1955 to 1959 as chairman of the editorial board of the *Biochemical Journal*. He moved to the Australian National University as the Professor of Physical Biochemistry - a field which was the precursor of modern molecular biology, in which he was one of the earliest protagonists, in which physical methods are used to study biological processes.

He stayed in Australia until 1970, when he returned to Oxford to serve with distinction as President of Trinity College (over the wall from Balliol); the Trinity College residential building in Rawlinson Road, Oxford, is named "Ogston House" after him. After his retirement from this office in 1978, he continued to help others by serving on and eventually chairing the Council of Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, until 1984.

Ogston, right, in 1965, with his predecessor as President of Trinity, Sir Arthur Norrington. Photograph: Oxford Mail and Times



Arts and Sciences at Trinity, by June Mendoza: left to right, Lord Clark, A.G. Ogston, Sir Hans Krebs, Sir Ronald Syme, Professor R.R. Porter

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Ogston, right, in 1965, with his predecessor as President of Trinity, Sir Arthur Norrington. Photograph: Oxford Mail and Times

Professor Ian Carruthers

Ian Carruthers will be remembered for his major contributions to agrarian development in the world's poorer countries - particularly in irrigation economics - and for the unique external degrees in Agricultural Development which he did so much to set up at Wye College.

He was among the first to recognise that capital investment in Third World irrigation systems would inevitably be wasted if attention was not paid to operating and maintenance costs. The question of appropriate levels and methods of cost recovery was one he continuously pressed. His work on irrigation resulted in many presentations and publications, culminating in the publication with Colin Clark of a seminal book, *The Economics of Irrigation*, in 1981.

He was born in 1938 in Sidcup, the eldest of four children, and went to Sidcup and Chislehurst Grammar School where he excelled academically and in sports. Subsequently, he attended Wye College, London University's outpost in Ashfield, Kent, and graduated with a First Class degree in Horticulture in 1961. Among other

activities at Wye, he established a record for throwing the cricket ball which stands to this day.

Following graduation, he undertook postgraduate studies at Oxford at the Institute of Agricultural Economics. With this training he joined Hunting Technical Services as an agricultural economist, working on the Lower Indus Project in Pakistan, then the largest irrigation programme in the world. It was this experience that set the course for his major contribution to irrigation economics.

Upon return to the United Kingdom in 1967, he was appointed to the staff of Wye College, in an ODA-funded post which required him to spend much of his time overseas. He went first to Makerere University in Uganda and subsequently to the University of Nairobi looking into irrigation and water management. At the Institute of Development Studies in Nairobi he extended his work to rural water supplies.

Back in Wye, he strengthened the teaching in overseas development and extended his work on the management of irrigation systems. The case for reform in the matter of cost recovery,

which he first discussed in *The Economics of Irrigation*, was again treated in his book with Leslie Small, *Farmer Financed Irrigation: the economics of reform*, published in 1991.

But Carruthers's life was not only concerned with irrigation. He addressed all manner of policy issues in the area of agricultural development, and his interests gradually broadened and took on a global perspective. He took an early lead in the discussion of environmental issues and subsequently of concerns for social development. More recently his views on world food security have become influential at the very highest levels in this important debate.

As an independent thinker he raised many important but perhaps awkward questions. With a ready fund of ideas he was in constant demand as an adviser and consultant to such bodies as the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the World Bank, the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Overseas Development Agency (ODA), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Com-

monwealth Secretariat and other bilateral organisations. He served as a non-executive director on the main board of the Commonwealth Development Corporation and as a Council Member of the Overseas Development Institute.

Ian Carruthers made an outstanding personal contribution to enhancing the accessibility of continuing professional development in sustainable agriculture and rural development internationally. He was the originator, inspiration and driving force for the Wye College External Programme. He had the foresight to identify an international need and the ability to generate the means for meeting it. He inspired and encouraged his colleagues to commit themselves to publish books and learning materials of the highest quality and relevance.

His initiative has enabled professionals world-wide to update their knowledge and to qualify for postgraduate London University degrees. The extraordinary success of the programme is recognised by government organisations, agencies and charities around the world. In 1994, it was awarded a Queen's Anniversary Prize.

Carruthers's extensive network of contacts enabled him also to recognise shifts in the demand for traditional year-long courses towards the shorter, highly focused professional update. He took up the challenge on behalf of the college, which now has an extensive and successful portfolio of courses for continuing professional development. In addition he took a full part in college affairs, serving for six years on the Governing Body and as Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics between 1988 and 1991. Recognition for his work came with his Readership in Agrarian Development in 1977 and subsequently the award of the Chair of Agrarian Development at Wye in 1984.

Ian Carruthers not only made an incisive and perceptive contribution to debate on international development; he was also a plantsman of considerable standing, taking great delight in his extensive garden at Waltham on the Kent Downs. He was a horticulturist by inclination and training and had a true feel for plants. Growing a variety of herbs gave him a

sense of their culinary use and he became a devoted cook, invariably preparing fine dinners that many enjoyed at his home. He lived with his second wife, Sarah Ladbury, both in England and occasionally in Cyprus. They shared an interest and expertise in social and economic development.



Carruthers: irrigation economics

Ian Douglas Carruthers, agricultural economist: born Sidcup, Kent 30 August 1938; Lecturer, Reader and Professor of Agricultural Development, Wye College 1967-96; married 1961 Barbara Price (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1992); 1993 Sarah Ladbury; died Canterbury 24 May 1996.

Ian Douglas Carruthers, agricultural economist: born Sidcup, Kent 30 August 1938; Lecturer, Reader and Professor of Agricultural Development, Wye College 1967-96; married 1961 Barbara Price (two sons, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1992); 1993 Sarah Ladbury; died Canterbury 24 May 1996.

Gerardo Rueda

Self-taught artists possess a special spirit of curiosity and invention that often stays with them and manifests itself in even their most mature and sophisticated creations. Gerardo Rueda Salaberry, to give him his full name, intended to become a lawyer, and studied law in Madrid before suddenly deciding he wanted to be a painter. He began painting landscapes in an Impressionist style derived from the French masters he so much admired, but soon moved on to more contemporary styles, influenced by Klee and Nicolas de Staël, and had his first one-man show, "Collages y dibujos abstractos" ("Collages and abstract drawings"), in 1954 at the Madrid gallery Abril.

Before that he had participated in group exhibitions with contemporaries like Antoni Tàpies, Manuel Millares and Manolo Rivera, exponents of abstract art power using cheap materials such as sack-cloth, plastic and pinboard.

Rueda's abstractions were usually refined, delicate, elegant expressions of his love of order, that still showed that "informal" quality of paint in keeping with a respect for "the obvious, the clear, the controlled".

He began exhibiting abroad, particularly in Latin America, that refuge of so many Spaniards during the Franco regime. He participated in the second Biennale Hispano-Americana in Havana in 1953, and in exhibitions in Caracas and Bogotá. His affection for, and gratitude towards Latin America lasted all his life, and at the time of his death a large retrospective of his works, "Trayectos" ("Pathway"), is going the rounds of all the leading art museums of South America.

In 1960 Rueda's work was displayed at the Biennale in Venice, and while in Rome after the exhibition he became interested in the work of Giorgio Morandi and his near-abstract still-lives. All through the Sixties his work was exhibited in the great galleries of Europe, in individual or group shows, and in 1962 he had a retrospective at the Tate Gallery in London.

His carefully constructed, perfectly balanced geometric assemblages were strengthened by the way he applied his paint, often with a bold palette, using a knife. He gradually freed himself from what might be perceived as over-rigid composition and, perhaps under the influence of Pierre Soulages and Yves Klein, released all his painterly energies in large monochrome works in various shades of grey, in black or royal blue. These were saved from monotony by accidental reliefs and various deliberate forms of surface animation, creating expanses of vital energy that occupied an almost sculptural space in the frame. This led to the creation of sculptures in wood or metal in the form of relief carvings during the 1970s.

Rueda never lost the playful, innocent spirit of the self-made artist, and on several occasions one could see him having fun with the mounting of window displays for important department stores like El Corte Inglés, and in 1991, out of a score of chosen contestants, he won first prize for the design of the entrance doors to the Spanish Pavilion at the Exposition Universelle in Seville, a monumental work that made his name and

brought an unusual breath of visionary self-expression to the contemplation of that great museum's most celebrated works. The exhibition went on to Seville the following year, and in 1992 Rueda also showed a personal collection at the Fourth El Cairo Biennale, during which he was awarded the Medalla de Honor Especial. This was just one of the many distinguished awards presented to the artist during his lifetime, culminating in 1995 with his election as permanent member of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando.

It was in March 1996 that Gerardo Rueda had the first of three cerebral attacks, when he attended in Valencia an anthology of his works organised by IVAM (Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno), which he declared open by saying: "I always have to have direct contact with art, to bring myself to it without any intermediaries of schools or theories." That was the young self-taught beginner speaking out frankly, just as he used to do when telling anyone who would listen that he did not understand Dürer or Matise. "My art is all in the emotion," he said.

Gerardo Rueda Salaberry, painter and sculptor: born Madrid 23 April 1926; died Madrid 25 May 1996.

his art known to thousands of people who had never heard of him before.

But he is best known for a truly adventurous, unique architectural and artistic undertaking in the city of Cuenca where, with his friends and fellow artists Fernando Zobel and Gustavo Izquierdo, he founded the first gallery of abstract art in Europe, housed in a visionary assemblage of *casa colgadas* or "hanging houses". No one who visits Cuenca can ever forget the liberating atmosphere of this unique museum and its exquisitely hung (in every sense) works of art, the most impressive collection of abstractions of all periods in Europe.

This was not the only public work Rueda undertook for Cuenca. Between 1990 and 1991, again possibly inspired by the work of Soulages and his semi-geometrical windows at Sainte-Foy abbey in Conques (Aveyron), Gerardo Rueda combined his passion for geometrical forms and sculpture and architecture in the construction of the noble windows of the cathedral of Cuenca, which remain for all to see as one of his major achievements.

In 1991 in Madrid Rueda participated in a collective exhibition, "El Prado visto por doce artistas contemporáneos" ("The Prado Viewed by Twelve Contemporary Artists"), which



Rueda: playful and innocent

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BIRTHS

LANDER: BARCLAY To Richard and Sarah, a son, Benjamin Michael Leonard, born 4 July, a brother for Rebecca.

DEATHS

BARNETT: Marjorie (Tilly), nee Stigg, formerly of the BBC and the *Lancet*, beloved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, died suddenly and peacefully on 6 July 1996, aged 85. Funeral at Golden Green Crematorium on 12 July, family flowers, donations to Friends of Edgeware General Hospital, enquiries to Co-operative Funeral Services, Edgeware, 0181-952 1393.

BURGESS: Fiers Heyworth, BA AHSLA, investment director, On 3 July 1996, died in hospital after a painful fight against a long illness. One of the most genuinely civilised people. Beloved husband of Melany and wonderful father to Katherine, Robert and Anna, also dearest son of Laura Robinson. Memorial service at Sherborne Abbey on Saturday 7 September at 11.30am. Donations if desired to Brian Mallon, Director of Finance, Royal Brompton Hospital, York Ward, Sydney Street, London SW3 6NP.

JANSON: Guy Janson MBE of Southwark, Service of thanksgiving, Friday 12 July at Southover Church, Southover High Street, Lewes, East Sussex at 2.30pm. All enquiries to Messrs Jansons of 7 Portman Street,

Buckingham Palace, Princess Alexandra, Chancellor, Lancaster University, presides at ceremonies for the conferral of Degrees and Honorary Degrees at Lancaster University and opens the Centenary Building of the Royal Lancaster Infirmary, Lancaster.

Changing of the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment marches a Yeoman Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; 1st Battalion Irish Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 4pm.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

London W1H 0BA. Telephone 0171 493 4113.

OPENSHAW: Clare Patricia, FRCCP. Died Saturday 6 July, peacefully at home aged 39. Wife of Peter and mother of Sam, Jonathan and Madeline. Quaker Memorial Service at Street Meeting, Somerset, at 2pm on Saturday 13 July. Celebration of her life in London in September. Her garden is a lovely thing. God rest her soul.

VAUGHAN: Clare Patricia, see OPENSHAW.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Wedding anniversaries, Tributes, Memorials) must be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Telephone 0171-253 2811 or fax 0171-253 2818, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra). OTHERS: Forthcoming marriages, Marriages must be submitted in writing (or fax) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

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Forthcoming marriages

Mr D. Widdicombe and Miss T. Lee

The engagement is announced from Hong Kong between Daniel, younger son of David Widdicombe QC and Mrs Anastasia Widdicombe, of London NW1, and their only daughter, of Mr and Mrs Kish Lee, of Hong Kong and Perth, Australia.

Birthdays

King Hassan II of Morocco, 67; Mr Peter Balfour, former chairman, Charterhouse plc, 75; Sir Philip Bridges, former Chief Justice of the Gambia, 74; Dame Barbara Cartland, novelist, 95; Mr David Chidgey MP, 54; Mr Richard Demarco, artist, 66; Sir George Edwards, former chairman, BAC, 88; Mr Eric Halliday, former Principal, St Chad's College, Durham University, 66; Sir Edward Heath MP, former Prime Minister, 80; Mr John Heath-Stubbs, poet, 78; Mr David Hockney, painter, 59; Dame Jill Knight MP, 69; Mr Richard Neilson, High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago, 59; Lord Osborne, a Senator of the College of Justice in Scotland, 59; Sir Richard Tucker, High Court judge, 66; Mr Michael Williams, actor, 61; Mr Richard Wilson, actor and director, 60; Dr Stephen Whitley, Headmaster, Uppingham School, 52.

Anniversaries

Births Ann Rodcliffe (Ann Ward), novelist, 1764; Charles Bruce Balmford, cartoonist, 1889; Ian Mikus, former Labour MP, 1908; Deaf Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1228; Jan van Eyck, painter, 1440; Edmund Burke, states-

man, 1797; King Camp Gillette, safety-razor inventor, 1952. On this day: Henry VIII divorced Anne of Cleves, 1540; the Bahamas became independent, 1973. Today is the Feast Day of St Ewald, St Nicholas Pleck and his Companions, The Martyrs of Gorran (Holland) and St Veronica de Julianis.

Lectures

British Museum: Elizabeth Bagdikian, "The Mesoamerican Ball Game: symbolic aspects", 1.15pm. RIBA Architecture Centre: Michael Wilford, "Current Buildings and Projects", 6.30pm.

Joan Thirkettle

A memorial service for Joan Thirkettle will be held at noon on Tuesday 3 September 1996 at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London EC4.

Luncheons

Newspaper Conference: Mr Michael Portillo MP, Secretary of State for Defence, was guest of honour and speaker at a Newspaper Conference Lunch held yesterday at the Newspaper Society, Bloomsbury Square, London WC1. Mr John Hipwood, Chairman, presided.

Dinners

HM Government: The Prince of Wales attended a dinner given by HM Government yesterday evening at Apsley House, London W1, in honour of the Sultan of Oman, Qaboos bin Said Al Said. Mr Nicholas Soames MP, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, and Field Marshal Sir Peter Inge, Chief of the Defence Staff, were the hosts.

Children act cases to be heard in private

LAW REPORT

9 July 1996

Re P-B (a minor): Court of Appeal (Lady Justice Butler-Sloss, Lord Justice Peter Gibson, Lord Justice Thorpe) 20 June 1996

Family proceedings involving children should generally be heard in private and, although the judge had a discretion, under rule 4.16(7) of the Family Proceedings Rules 1991, to hear all or part of the case in public, he was not bound by considerations of open justice or freedom of expression to do so.

The Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal by the father of a five-year-old boy, who may not be identified, against the decision of Judge Goldstein, sitting in Bow County Court on 14 March 1996, that the father's application for a residence order under the Children Act 1989 should not be heard in open court.

The father in person, Janet Plange (Lucas & Ball) for the mother, Harry Tueran (Official Solicitor) as amicus curiae.

Lady Justice Butler-Sloss said the father had asked for the whole case, evidence and judgment, to be in open court. The application was supported by an intervenor in the proceedings, and was not objected to by either the mother or the Official

Solicitor. The judge nevertheless felt constrained by rule 4.16(7) of the 1991 Rules to decide that the proceedings should all be heard in private. Rule 4.16(7) provided:

Unless the court otherwise directs, a hearing of, or directions appointment in, proceedings to which this Part applies shall be in chambers.

To her Ladyship's mind those words were clear and simple. However, the appellant suggested that the "default position", if no application was made to hear the case in public, was to hear it in chambers, but that the judge ought to exercise his discretion in each case to come to the inevitable conclusion that all cases should be heard in public.

He set out a number of arguments in support of hearing child cases in public, including the right of the public to know what was going on, criticism of secret justice, the dangers of hearing cases in private without the scrutiny of the public and press, and the inability of litigants in person to get experience in conducting child cases or to find out what the judge was like. He suggested they were rotten

laws and a rotten use of discretion.

In support of these arguments, he relied on a line of cases which set out the importance of open justice in the courts, in particular *Scott v Scott* [1913] AC 417, and on the views of several members of the judiciary in lectures or articles.

He recognised the long-established practice of excluding the public in wardship cases and sought to distinguish it from all other children cases. He was not, in her Ladyship's view, able to sustain that distinction. The court's paramount duty in wardship, namely care of the ward, was now to be found in section 1 of the Children Act: "the welfare of the child shall be the court's paramount consideration".

The appellant also relied on articles 6 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 6(1) provided for the public hearing of cases, but with the proviso of exclusion of the press and public from all or part of the trial "where the interests of juveniles . . . so require". The right to freedom of expression contained in article 10 was

also subject to conditions. It would seem that present procedures in family cases were in accordance with the Convention.

The long-established practice in the English High Court and county courts when hearing applications for custody or access (now called residence or contact) or wardship had been and remained to hear the whole of the evidence in private. In the High Court, judgment would often be given in public where the court believed there was a public interest in the case or to give guidance to practitioners.

Despite the appellant's arguments, it was abundantly clear that the courts were bound by rule 4.16(7) to hear child cases generally in private. The sub-rule allowed for all or part of the case to be heard in public, but in the light of the long-established practice it was unlikely that judges would, other than rarely, hear the evidence relating to the welfare of a child in public.

The exercise of discretion remained in the hands of the trial judge and it was a matter for the judge in each case to exercise that discretion if called upon to do so.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

Rueda

المرشد

the leader page

British politics requires more thought

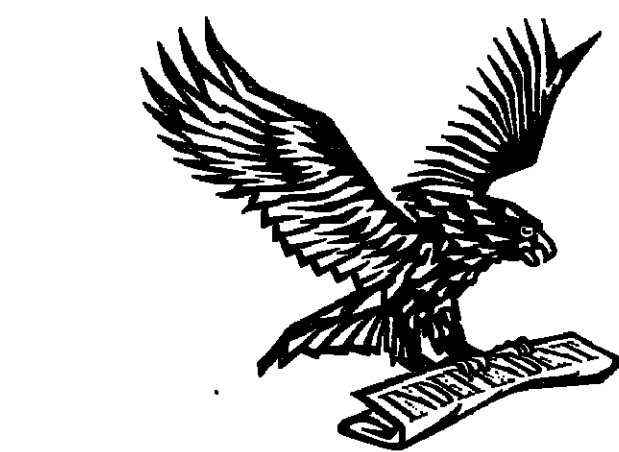
Like management consultancy, think-tankery is thing of parts. One part is charlatanism, another is opportunism and a third part is chutzpah. Both the consultants and the think tanks rose to their present eminence in the Eighties. Then, if you needed a cover story for mass sacking, you called a consultant; if you needed a fig leaf for a prime minister's whim, such as the poll tax, you whistled up a think-tank report. This was not all bad. It was the decade that taught the Tories to think, and to respect ideas – including foreign ideas. And the right-wing think tanks had real political influence. Without their chutzpah and, at times, their charlatanism, the Thatcherite programme would have lacked some of its internal self-confidence and determination.

Today, however, the think tanks of the right are in decline. They are facing leftist think tanks, which don't seem to have the same influence on Tony Blair as the Conservative ones had on Margaret Thatcher. And now, in a strange turnabout, David Willetts, formerly of the Centre for Policy Studies and now a Conservative minister, has published a CPS pamphlet to denounce – of all things – thinkers and think tanks.

He selects eight gurus (including the unguru-like editor of this newspaper) and chastises them for creating a climate of opinion which is un-British

and may help Mr Blair's New Labour. Unlike the home-spun wisdom of the Tories, Blair, it seems, is surrounded by thinkers influenced by foreigners, including that dreadful Chinaman Confucius. Once he might have sought to explain how an Austrian, Friedrich von Hayek, could both have profoundly influenced the German social market economic model and been hailed by Lady Thatcher. Nor, we seem to recall, was Milton Friedman a yeoman of Sussex.

At any rate, confronted by the proposition that British politicians are being drenched with fresh thinking from home or abroad, we can only say: "We wish." The Institute of Economic Affairs and its aficionados have spun a tale about how Mrs Thatcher was captured by its free-market ideas. It was, in truth, always a little more complicated and duller than they made out. The Thatcherite Tories respected Hayek and Friedman more than they read them. But the evidence of Blair and his colleagues mopping up books of political theory is scant by comparison. There are occasional respectful references to handy bestsellers and the thoughts of American Democratic pundits. Terms such as "stakeholding" have proved useful for a speech or two. Political reform was put on to the party's agenda by the campaigners of Charter 88 and frustrated Labour activists. But the stronger influences on



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Labour's thinking are the current mood of the tabloid and Conservative press, with a nod at the Liberal papers. Labour shows no great relish for ideas. Indeed, we rather fear that Mr Paul Dacre, editor of the *Daily Mail*, is as strong a current influence on the party as any liberal pundit or modish economist. It's certainly the case that Mr Willetts, as an opponent, is paying more respectful intellectual attention to the alleged Blair gurus than Blair does.

That, however, is politics. Authors and think-tank directors would love us to believe that there is an old-fashioned intellectual hegemony which can be

spun together and will trap the dominant politicians of the day. But the times when a coherent intellectual movement has swept through a capital have tended to produce bad, sometimes bloody, politics. Leninism was coherent and, up to a point, intellectual. So was the "Republican revolution" in America, which is now lying smashed by the force of its own logic. These days, the left is relatively uninteresting compared to the hard-edged thinkers of the right. The left's ideas are kinder, gentler and vaguer. Even the most kindly disposed friends of the Institute of Public Policy Research would admit that it is low key.

Demos, that enfant terrible of recent think tanks, is a great predictor of trends and tendencies. But we need to distinguish ideas that actually make it into policy (which are few) and ideas which shake things up by flipping over the prism of perspective.

The ideas on offer to Labour now are simple and starting points only. "Globalisation" does not get us far, but at least it points to the dependency of workforces, even regions on the ever-faster velocity of capital: insecurity is a real and common feeling. Political reform is not an idea imported from Germany, or anywhere else, but a common-sense reaction to the failings of the British political system over the past 20 years – failings felt by most observers, specialist or not. The centralisation of government is an observable fact. On social policy, there are as many remedies as thinkers, but a new toughness on welfare among some on the left is not intellectual, so much as a reaction to the lives and opinions of Labour constituents. These ideas are in the air and will influence Labour not because some people have written books, but because they correspond to common feelings, repeated in newspapers and MPs' surgeries.

Does this mean that the gurus and their enemies are equally irrelevant? Not at all. Thinkers, never a terribly popular lot in Britain, have a role and

responsibility in arming and equipping political leaders to subvert and challenge public opinion, but also to educate and inform it. Whether they congregate in tanks or move like free spirits along the M40, we all need more not less thinking.

Around the world again

Magellan did it through his straits. Francis Drake did it on his *Hind*. Captain James Cook would have done it – had the natives not been so friendly. It was still relatively interesting when Chay Blyth did it single-handedly on a boat commemorating a nationalised industry.

But a quarter of a century later, it has to be said that, however it is done, whether east to west, back to front, in a canoe or a catamaran, circumnavigation of the globe has become a bit of a ritual.

Two-and-a-half cheers only, then, for Samantha Brewster and her feat of lone sailing. The tang of the salt off Tierra del Fuego, the threat of typhoons in Celebes, nothing can detract from the drama of this odyssey except that repeat mariners know what to expect.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Putting a price on the environment

Sir: John Gummer's "real anger" (Letters, 5 July) at Labour's lack of environmental commitment would be more convincing if he had not been supporting the international effort of some neo-liberal economists to "monetise" nature and amenity.

Their theory is that human lives should be valued according to whether they are lived in rich countries or poor ones, so that the life of a North American or a West European is many times more valuable than that of a Bangladeshi.

The same doctrine seeks to find a money value for individual components of the environment by asking what financial compensation affected individuals might accept for the loss of them.

Both these doctrines are expressions of that monetarist philosophy which has proved incapable of understanding that, in allowing misuse of "the environment", governments are exacting subsidies from today's poor, and from all future generations, for the benefit of today's fat cats. These subsidies are what need sorting out by the world's official economists, including Mr Gummer's, and they can't do it using the vocabulary of "the market".

WAYLAND KENNET
(Lord Kennet)
House of Lords
London SW1

Sir: With an election date looming it is not enough for Frank Dobson to promise those concerned with the low profile of Labour's environment policy that "more will be made available in due course" (letter, 8 July). Labour's draft manifesto says they will "encourage" energy saving, "promote" green business and "recognise" environmental challenges – but it fails to say how it will achieve any of these.

We can all recognise the challenge. Even the Conservative Party shares these aims. However, only the Liberal Democrats are prepared to rise to that challenge with specific policies.

We are the only one of the major political parties to make the commitment that the Climate Action Network UK calls for: a target of reducing CO₂ emissions by 30 per cent over 15 years, and we explain in detail how we would achieve it. We are committed to detailed proposals to shift to environment taxation – taxing pollution but using the funds to cut taxes on jobs and products.

Every politician likes to sound green these days but Liberal Democrats uniquely explain what we will do about it.
MATTHEW TAYLOR MP
(Truro, Lib Dem)
Liberal Democrat Environment Spokesperson
House of Commons
London SW1

Merry July

Sir: This morning (8 July) I received a Christmas card from the president of Help the Aged, together with a catalogue of their cards for purchase. With almost half the year still to go, I wonder, is this a record?
SUE MILLER
Oxford



No way to control the baby

Sir: Speaking as a relative pro (GP and mother of four) I would like to encourage people who don't "stay in control" and use painkillers during birth (reports, 5 July). We strive to be in charge of our partners, our midwives, our doctors and ourselves, but can we really be in control of the baby?

My first was an epidural because I couldn't stand the pain, the next was natural but uncomfortable, the third was a dream birth, and the last was the worst, despite gas and air. This was nothing to do with my attitude or the hospital's, but because presumably the baby was a different shape and the labour took a different path.

If you have a perfect birth, say thanks to the baby, and when it's hard and you need help remember it is the beginning of allowing freedom to your child.
DR ET MANN
Harrogate, North Yorkshire

Save the whale from myths

Sir: Much of what Roger Scruton (report, 3 July) has to say about animal rights is worthy of consideration. To enlist *Moby Dick*, though, as a vindication of whaling does lead one to wonder whether Professor Scruton has undertaken a serious study of what may well be, as he puts it, the "greatest American novel".

First, Melville "account[s] the whale immortal in his species" – that is, that his "Leviathans", are immune to extinction.

Secondly, to argue along these lines seems to suggest that Melville's priority in *Moby Dick* was to provide an account of the whale fishery of the 19th century, or a natural history of the great "fish" (yes: Melville defends the view that whales are fish). So far as Ahab was "monomaniacal" about the great white whale, and so far as this monomania corrupted his humanity, it might better be stated that *Moby Dick* is a cautionary tale to all persons who objectify things (one great white whale; other animals) and pursue them indifferent to how the pursuit impacts upon both his moral nature and the community of which he is a part.
JELLIS PERRY IV
Department of Philosophy
University of Aberdeen

Sabotage plan for angry dons

Sir: The media have been absorbed with the rows over salaries for airline pilots and MPs. Could you find a column inch or two to address academics' salaries?

After protracted negotiations university lecturers have been made a final offer of 1.5 per cent. None of us can remember when we last received a pay rise that matched inflation.

I suggest that from next autumn we simply take every application form for a place at a British university and put it through the office shredder, or at least lock it away in a safe place until after the next general election. Schools,

applicants and their parents might then at least become aware that there is a problem. Some of those parents might well be senior civil servants and politicians.

It is very important that we do not hurt our present students. I suggest we award all of them first-class degrees next year. The students won't complain, but it might create problems for prospective employers – business, the Civil Service, the media. As none of these bodies care about us, why should we care about them?

Now, it might be that we will be deemed to be breaking the law – so I suggest that all academics be put in boot camps: we will benefit from the physical exercise and the mental relaxation. And who will staff the universities during our absence? Draft in the military! The entertainment value of the ensuing scenes will boost the nation's morale no end.
DR ROBERT PORTER
Department of Russian Studies
Bristol University

Golden age of consensus

Sir: Fifty years ago was certainly no golden age (leading article 6 July). Britain was bankrupt after a six-year war, but let's try forty years ago, when the post-war cross-party agreement on the welfare state and full employment had something to show.

In 1955 there were only 232,000 unemployed (1.1 per cent) and 192,000 houses were built for local

authorities. The average rate of inflation for the previous three years was just under 3 per cent. Personal taxes were high, but there were no beggars on the streets or either teenagers or the mentally unstable sleeping rough.

In England and Wales the number of divorces was only 7 per cent of the number of marriages. The 1955 records show only 30 murders. The streets were safe and there was not enough mugging to be recorded.

Now we have abandoned all that for the "permissive society", where, to quote the Book of Judges, "Everyone did that which was right in their own eyes". The rich get richer and the poor get poorer. There are now nearly ten times as many unemployed. Half the marriages now end in divorce, leaving half today's children with that undesired trauma.

It is hardly surprising that if we are now told by our intellectual leaders that there is no life after death and certainly no judgement for what we get away with here, that we grab what we can and hold on to it hard. Even the Labour Party have abandoned any commitments either to full employment or to expenditure which would raise taxes, however slightly, on the rich to look after the sick, the poor and homeless or to bring our education up to the level of our competitors. The second great commandment of the Christian faith is that we should love our neighbour as ourselves. We forget that at our peril.
SIR FRED CATHERWOOD
President, The Evangelical Alliance
London SE11

Power to the judges

Sir: Francesca Klug of Charter 88 (letter, 5 July) contests my statement that a Bill of Rights would necessarily shift power to judges. In doing so, she amply illustrates why I am right.

Opportunities to sue government ministers and public officials have already grown enormously in recent decades, without a Bill of Rights. The mind boggles at the torrent of litigation which would result if judges were also required to weigh government decisions against a vague list of "universal values".

The experience of the New Zealand Bill of Rights model, where the courts cannot overturn legislation, also supports my contention. The New Zealand Bill of Rights was not entrenched due to lack of popular support for such a move. Yet the New Zealand Court of Appeal has already succeeded in making the Bill of Rights into an instrument that goes far beyond what was originally intended by New Zealand's parliament.

Ms Klug argues that international human rights instruments provide a suitable source for a common set of values. The proponents of "objective values" must restrict themselves to a few abstract ideals whose vagueness allows almost any interpretation. By judges. I have no doubt that Messrs Woolf, Slynn and others are very clever chaps but we should not ask them to become philosopher-kings.
RICHARD BACON
London SW1

Options open on windfall tax

Sir: Insinuations in the *Independent* (3, 4 July) that some privatised utilities are "hopeful" of exemption from Labour's proposed windfall tax have no basis whatever.

I have met representatives of British Gas – though the purpose of our meeting was not to discuss the windfall tax – and I have met others, including a representative of National Grid, who have specifically wanted to discuss the windfall tax.

I have spelt out on each occasion that Labour has a clear policy of a windfall levy in the monopolistic profits of privatised utilities. I have also on each occasion confirmed what we have said previously – that the introduction of such a levy would be after consultation in government with the industry regulators and that no commitments have been, or are being made, on the level, method of assessment or scope of the levy.

The utilities are important industries, which we want to see give a good service to consumers and make successful contribution to the economy. It is right that we meet them to discuss matters of mutual concern, and receive their representations. But the application of our policy – strongly supported by the public – will not be deflected by misleading analysis or lobbying pressure.

ANDREW SMITH MP
(Oxford East, Lab)
Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury
House of Commons
London SW1

Love, death and film rights

Sir: The point of Roger Clarke's article "Death in Venice – the Remix" (5 July) was obviously to let his imagination run riot. I feel obliged, however, to point out two particular inaccuracies concerning the film production *Love and Death on Long Island*.

The figure of £5000 bears no relation to the purchase of the film rights from Gilbert Adair. Chance would have been a fine thing.

The Canadian backers made no intervention in the casting process, and were not made "nervous" by any aspect of it. In my limited experience, a nervous backer is a non-backer.
RICHARD KWIETNIOWSKI
London NW1

Just relax

Sir: Bernice Weston's Age Power (report, 4 July) seems hardly more than an attempt to market manic activity as an elixir. When over the hill you do indeed gather speed. You also get a clear view of what is at the bottom. If the over-fifties feel bad about the future it is because they simply regret the human condition, not that there is insufficient to do. I strongly advise them to avoid this fatuous enterprise and recover the innate human aptitude for indolence.
MICHAEL MCKEON
Middleton in Teesdale,
Co Durham

Slogan war

Sir: If "New Labour, New Danger", why not "Old Tory, Old Story"?
D W NIXON
Albrighton,
Shropshire

What is the Jewish state for?

In Israel, John Lichfield discovers a nation divided over how to make peace but sharing a collective identity crisis

Part One: West Bank

Six teenage Israeli soldiers, rifles propped across their laps, are sitting in the dust, eating chocolate. Beside them is a rambling, ancient building, which is part mosque, part synagogue. According to the Book of Genesis, Chapter 23, a cave beneath the building is the burial place of Abraham, patriarch of Judaism and also of Islam. Here also rest Abraham's wife Sarah and their son Isaac and his wife Rebecca.

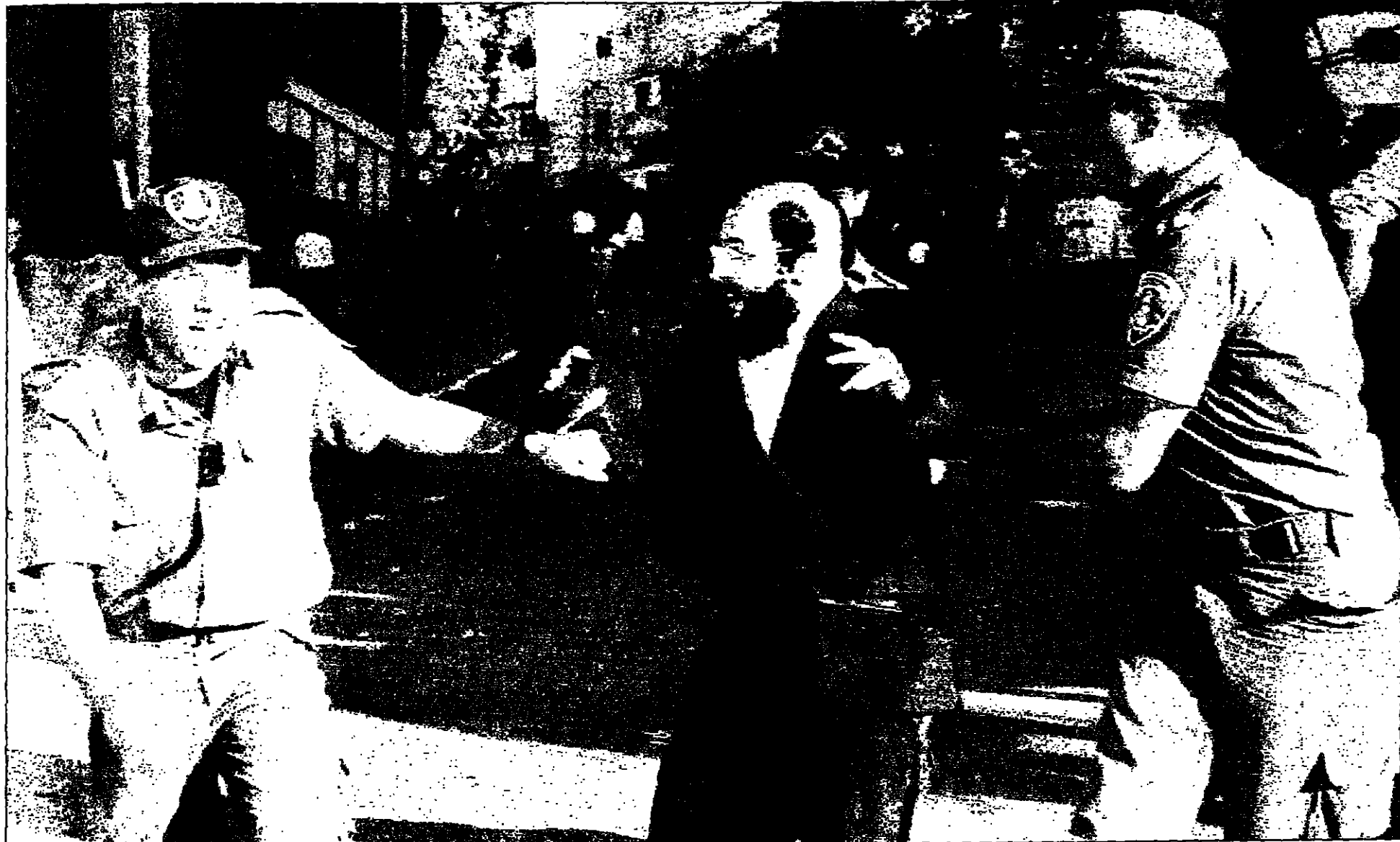
A sleepy menace fills the air. Jews are forbidden by the Israeli army to enter the back of the building, which is a mosque. Muslims are forbidden to enter the front, which is a synagogue. Only "Christians" (short-hand for everyone else) are allowed to visit both. The crumbling streets are deserted save for Israeli paratroopers and groups of children. A gang of Palestinian kids chat to a grinning Israeli soldier: two Jewish kids play on tricycles. The children, who ignore each other, look startlingly similar. They can be told apart only by the small knitted kippas which the Jewish youngsters wear. In this place, at this time, it is reasonable to assume that their parents might cheerfully kill each other.

This is Hebron, the third most holy town in the Holy Land, and the only large Palestinian town on the West Bank still under Israeli control. In the next couple of days – maybe as soon as today – Hebron will provide the first real clue to the intentions of the new Israeli government of Bibi Netanyahu.

It was here, at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in December 1994, that a Jewish settler, Baruch Goldstein, murdered 29 Muslim pilgrims at prayer. It was here that Yigal Amir, the man who murdered Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November last year, spent most of his weekends, praying with a group of 200 biblically inspired Israeli extremists who insist on living in the heart of an otherwise wholly Palestinian town. Why they do is because it was also here that an entire Jewish community was massacred by Arabs in 1929.

Equally, Hebron is regarded as one of the principle strongholds of Hamas, the Islamic movement behind the suicide bombings of Israeli cities in February and March which help to explain – but do not wholly explain – the defeat last month of Mr Rabin's successor, Shimon Peres.

When Mr Netanyahu meets President Clinton in Washington today, Hebron will be at the top of the agenda. Under the



An ultra-Orthodox Jew under arrest after a protest in Jerusalem; but those with strong religious views are not alone in feeling bewildered at Israel today

Brian Hender/AP

terms of the second Oslo agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) was supposed to have "redeployed" in March, remaining only in the town centre to defend the small, aggressive Jewish community there. The transfer was postponed by the Hamas bombings and again by the Israeli elections.

During his campaign, candidate Netanyahu, prospecting for votes on the religious right, said he might delay the redeployment in Hebron indefinitely. To do so would be a clear signal that he intends to adopt a confrontational approach with the Palestinians (and the US) which would, in effect, bury the peace process.

On the other hand, if he tells President Clinton today that Israeli troops will shortly leave most of Hebron, Netanyahu will be hailed in the West as a pragmatist, prepared to keep the peace process on track to who-knows-where.

Which is it to be? Perhaps neither. The word is that the IDF is already packing up and leaving purely Palestinian areas. However, to cover his domestic right flank, Netanyahu is expected to strengthen (at least cosmetically) the IDF grip on

The mind reels with an overload of conflicting certainties

the town centre. The West – even the Palestinian leadership – may accept this fudge with relief. But local Palestinian leaders forecast trouble.

Hebron encapsulates not only the convoluted and bloody history of this part of the Middle East but also its muddled and hazardous, immediate future. Dozens of conversations in the past eight days

across Israel, Golan and the West Bank with politicians, officials, soldiers and citizens leave the mind reeling with an overload of categorical (and mutually conflicting) certainties.

But here is a working hypothesis: there will be no frontal assault on the peace process by Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu. He will try to muddle his way for at least a year without a clear idea of what he is muddling towards. It is a commonplace among Israelis – even those who voted for him – to complain: "Who is Bibi Netanyahu? No-one knows." In this, if in nothing else, Mr Netanyahu is a man perfectly matched to the moment. Israel is going through an identity crisis, more wrenching than any in its brief history.

Part Two: Jerusalem

Any course in "the Middle East for beginners" should include 10 minutes among the tribes of modern Israel at the Jerusalem central bus station. A young woman sells pirated rock 'n' roll CDs: two ultra-Orthodox young men in dark suits and broad-brimmed black hats shove each other for a seat on the bus: a black (Ethiopian) Israeli serves kosher sandwiches to an impatient queue wearing a selection of black hats and baseball caps.

Last month's election, the most important in Israeli history, was shaped as much by questions Israelis asked of and about themselves: Who are we? Why are we here? Do we want to become a "normal" Western

state? Or do we want to create something uniquely Jewish? What are Jewish values?

To this should be added a related question, which Israelis tend not to ask: Would a renewed emphasis on Jewishness – something promised by Mr Netanyahu – make peace with the Arabs easier or harder?

Ilit Eitam is a farmer on the Golan heights, mother of seven, and wife of a general. "What does it mean to be a Jew in a Jewish state," she asks. "If you end up living in a little America? Why do we take all this heavy stuff on ourselves? [She waves towards the bookshelves full of Hebrew texts] when our children say they want to be American. Eighty per cent of young people in Israel don't know the ten commandments. That's the problem we have. We have to make the life of our children meaningful. In the Jewish way, Jewish values. A Jewish life."

The battles within Israeli society are sometimes presented as a struggle between secular liberals and religious conservatives. Such a struggle does exist and sometimes turns violent. In Jerusalem last weekend 3,000 black-hatted Haredi Jews hurled stones and insults at police in an attempt to close a major city thoroughfare that they insist should be closed on Shabbat (the sabbath). But strongly religious Jews are not the only ones to survey Israel today and to feel a sense of bewilderment.

A very senior Labour figure, speaking off the record, said his party – although well-known to

be a bastion of secular Israel – lost the election partly because it trampled unnecessarily on the sensitivities of such people (Israel's silent majority). "We came over for the first time as anti-religious, rather than secular but tolerant."

Who are we? Why are we here? What are Jewish values?

The fundamental argument – sometimes raging within individual Israelis – is between Israel as a chosen country and Israel as a normal country. With prosperity surging in the quasi-peace of the past three years, "normality" is tempting to many non- or semi-religious Israelis but also alarming. Many, but not all, religious Jews take a hard line in the Palestinian debate (which is also in a sense about normalising Israel's relations with its enemy-neighbours). Many, but not all, secular-leaning Israelis are inclined to take a risk on peace.

Part Three: Jericho, Tel Aviv, Hebron

In the Jordan Valley, between Jericho and the Dead Sea, there is a little barbed wire compound flying two flags: the blue and white of Israel and the red, green, white and black flag of Palestine. In the blinding heat (somewhere in the mid 90s

Fahrenheit), a little ceremony is being enacted: Israeli soldiers and Palestinian police are about to set out on a joint patrol through Jericho. Israeli soldiers live on one side of the base: Palestinian "police" (many of them former PLO "freedom fighters" from Iraq or Tunisia) on the other. Between the two a barbed-wire fence provides a neat emblem of the ambiguous condition of Israeli-Palestinian relations.

Captain Fuad Rajhi, a Palestinian officer is asked whether it is humiliating to serve alongside his former enemies. He replies cryptically, quoting Shimon Peres: "Peace is made between enemies, not between friends."

Just before we leave, another Palestinian officer discovers that our Arabic-speaking travelling companion was born in Baghdad. He asks him, when no one else is listening, what he thinks of the situation there. Our companion, mischievously and untruthfully, says that he is a strong supporter of Saddam. The officer, who had been backslapping with the Israelis two minutes before, beams and says: "God bless you sir."

Such talk is commonplace between Palestinians in private, including, it is said, Yasser Arafat. If you believe the peace process is a sham, or doomed to fail, here is your proof. But many senior pro-peace Israeli politicians and officials insist that it proves nothing.

Ehud Barak is a former head of the Israeli armed forces, and the man most likely to succeed Shimon Peres next year as

leader of the Labour party. Speaking in his temporary office in Tel Aviv, he says he has no doubt that Arafat and some of those around him still nurse hopes of dismantling the Jewish state. "This is the dream, but so what? He has a right to dream. It will lead him nowhere."

The reality, says Mr Barak (one of the most hard-headed Labour hawks) is that Arafat recognises that he must deal with Israel to preserve his own power and influence from the Islamist challenge of Hamas.

The only way to "alter the dynamics" of the Middle East, he says, is for Israel to take a "calculated risk" to satisfy legitimate Palestinian demands and hope that Palestinian, and other Arab, attitudes are changed by economic and social benefits of the peace.

Israel, he says, can afford to take a risk. "We are too strong, militarily and economically, to be removed from the Middle East and the Arabs now know that. Some people in Likud will not accept that. They have a shitelet [ghetto] state of mind which must feel itself constantly threatened by enemies all around."

Netanyahu has a dilemma: whether to go ahead with his election slogans and the traditional postures of Likud and inevitably break his head on the political realities of the Middle East or to pull into the centre and go along with the broad lines of our policies. I am fully confident, knowing the personality, that he will go the second way.

But, as Ehud Barak says, Netanyahu has in effect handed Hamas a veto over the peace process. Even if he does keep the show on the road, it is entirely unclear where he is prepared to go in the talks on the "final status" of the Palestinian state-in-embryo.

Yoissi Alpher, a former Mossad (Israeli intelligence) executive, who was involved in the private negotiations that led eventually to the Oslo agreement, puts it this way: "In a worst-case scenario, the process could fall apart on any number of short-term problems or a resurgence of Hamas terror. It's a best-case scenario, we are looking one year from now at a major crisis in the final status negotiations."

Then what? Of the many election promises Netanyahu made, there is maybe only one really dear to his heart: his promise to bring Reagan-Thatcherism to Israel and create a new economic golden age. The existing boom in foreign investment in Israel depends entirely on peace: a collapse in the negotiations with the Palestinians could turn Bibi's golden age to lead.

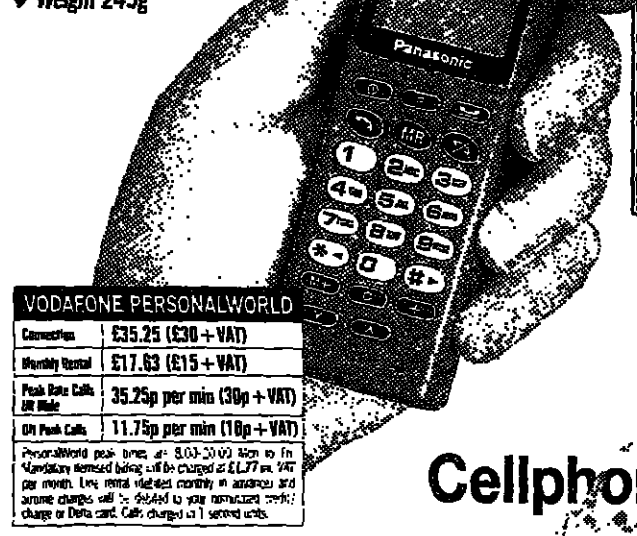
There are some politicians and commentators who believe that, rather than allow this to happen, Netanyahu will ditch some of the religious and rightist parts of his coalition, and seek a grand coalition with Labour. But to do so would bring him head-on into collision with that other grand explosive question of Israeli politics: what is the Jewish state for? Peace and prosperity might be adequate answers in almost any other country. Not in Israel.

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All that detritus we fill our heads with ...

So anyway, I just happened to write the other day that Arthur Askey's catchphrase was "Give him the money, Barney!" and the letters rolled in from all round the globe to point out that I had got it all wrong. It wasn't Arthur Askey at all. It was Wilfred Pickles, on his radio programme *Have a Go!*

Some of you were openly contemptuous of my mistake, some of you were quite kind and understanding, pretending that I really knew the truth all along. And for those of you who haven't the faintest what this is all about, a letter from a correspondent called Hilary Mackenzie will fill you in.

She says: "The catchphrase came from Wilfred Pickles who hosted a rather dreadful cross between a quiz and a chatshow in the Forties. It was called *Have a Go!* and that in itself was a popular catchphrase. The programme bristled with them – eg 'What's on the table, Mabel?' referring to the glittering prizes available like a pair of fur gloves or 30 bob, and also the stunning question, 'Have you ever had

an embarrassing moment?' (this invariably to shy young women whose knicker elastic had failed them at solemn moments).

"My grandmother adored this stuff: my parents dismissed it as 'corny' (another dated word). As a child, I saw it as yet another example of the daftness of grown-ups. But I've remembered all the catchphrases! Isn't it maddening?"

Yes. And the silly thing is that I knew perfectly well that it was Wilfred Pickles who said "Give her the money, Barney!" and that Arthur Askey was someone quite different, someone whose catchphrases were "Hello playmates!" and "I thank you!"

He was also someone who made 78 rpm records of songs like "The Worm", "The Bee" and "The Knitting Song", which my father had bought and got tired of, and which I thought were hilarious. Even these many years later I can remember whole chunks of these ditties, such as the opening of the "Knitting Song":

*Some like football
Some like darts*



Miles Kington

*I like knitting
And the gender arts
Half a dozen needles.
An ounce or two of wool.
Fills my cup of happiness –
Chock full...*

I think I even saw Arthur Askey on stage once, when I was a lad in the Fifties, and we always went to the local pantomime in Liverpool, which brings me miraculously to the next point on which I have been copiously corrected by readers. I said recently I had come across the word "jigger" in a Billy Bunter book. Being used to mean "a bicycle", I took the chance at the time of supplying an exhaustive list of other meanings of "jigger". But to Liverpoolian readers

it was not exhaustive. Quite a handful have written to me to say that there was a peculiarly Scouse meaning of the word, referring to the lane running between back gardens of terraced houses.

Janet Laming, now of Cambridge, says: "When I was a child in Liverpool in the Forties and Fifties, streets of terraced houses often had a parallel alley at the bottom of the backyards or gardens, giving pedestrian access to the house. I sometimes heard it said of a handy-legged man that 'he couldn't stop a pig in a jigger'. I never met a pig in a jigger, but the idea caught my imagination enough to have stayed with me."

A wonderful expression, and I shall try to adopt it. However, I was really hoping that someone would come up with other slang expressions for a bicycle except for "jigger", as it seems odd that we have no deictic word for a bike apart from "bike". The only letter on the subject has come from Mr Paul Dillingham in far off Finland, who says that he was taught at

Winchester in the Fifties that "bogle" was a colloquial word for bicycle.

I have never heard of this. I do know, however, that in Scotland the word "bogle" means a ghost. Does this add anything to the richness of the debate? The answer, of course, is that it does not.

And that concludes this round-up of recent readers' points – except to say that I am impressed by a fax from Glasgow, bearing Gerry Dunne's nominations for a competition I mentioned for the Most Annoying Remarks in Daily Life:

"Not to put too fine a point on it."

"Not so as you'd notice".

"A word's as good as a nod to a blind man."

"What's your problem, then?"

"Cat got your tongue?"

"As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted..."

"Can I just run this by you?"

"How long is a piece of string?"

"To which I would just add, 'I hear what you're saying' and 'There you go then'."

Marching the ancient Orange road to nowhere

When the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, David Trimble, offered the opinion yesterday that the Orange Order is no more sectarian in its outlook and social role than other Protestant organisations such as the Guides, his mind was suddenly suffused with a disturbingly congenial image of shiny-faced little girls in berets and ankle socks storming up Rossville Street waving light cudgels and squeaking at the top of tiny voices. "Kill the Fenian bastards!"

This was the slogan shouted, more gruffly, by ominous members of the Orange Order and the Apprentice Boys as they erupted into the Bogside on 12 August 1969 with a view to putting matters on uppy "Fenians" who had dared to oppose the annual "Boys" parade along the edge of the overwhelmingly Catholic areas in Derry.

In truth, while there was scarcely anyone in the Bogside who wasn't thoroughly opposed to the Apprentice Boys' march, only a minority had gone down to the bottom of Rossville Street to proclaim their hostility. But the incursion into the area of a force of men with sashes around their necks and mayhem on their

Ulster's traditions are the problem not the solution, says Eamonn McCann

minds changed that in a twinkling. The Bogside erupted. Two days and nights of fighting followed. Efforts by the RUC to reimpose order on the area ended with members of the force literally falling down from exhaustion. On the afternoon of 14 August, men of the Prince of Wales Own Regiment, ordered in by the Home Secretary, James Callaghan, threw a barricade of barbed wire across the main exit/entrance between the Bogside and the city centre.

Thus did an Orange march trigger the events that led to Unionism's loss of local control over law and order. Unionist leaders have been striving without success to regain this ground ever since. They are determined at least not to have to give away any more.



David Trimble sports the colours

Photograph: PA

Their problem is that the ground has changed, not just in terms of sectarian demography – the Garvaghy Road in Portlaoise (where David Trimble's massed forces demand to march) was "mixed" in 1969 but is now overwhelmingly Catholic – but also in terms of political balance and context.

The relative numerical growth in the Catholic population, the more

remarkable growth in the size and self-confidence of the Catholic middle class, the economic shifts that have made southern Ireland a junior partner rather than a poor neighbour of Britain in Europe, the impoverishment of sections of the Protestant working class that could once look to the Orange lodge for marginal advantage over Catholics, the internationalisation of the north-

ern conflict generally, all this had made the chances of the "Orange State" being reconstituted so remote as scarcely to be worth thinking about.

Except that there is little in the philosophy of Orangeism for its leaders to think about. David Trimble and Ian Paisley are, of course, right when they say that their marches – all 2,500-plus of them annually – are "traditional". The marches have been the main means whereby Unionist leaders have symbolised and celebrated the second-class-citizenship not just of Catholics but of all who have dissented from the notion of "Protestant Ulster".

The Orange Order is not just a Protestant organisation. It is certainly not – despite the presumably well-meaning promotional efforts of the "cultural traditions" lobby – a harmless expression of "Protestant communal culture".

It is not Protestant but specifically and explicitly anti-Catholic.

Catholics cannot join, of course. A member who marries a Catholic or attends a Catholic religious service is liable to expulsion. In 1959, Phelim O'Neill, a Unionist MP, was expelled for attending a

Catholic mass in his constituency.

The function of the Order, and the significance of its penchant for parading, was well expressed by its own historian, the Rev John Brown, in the Sixties: "On 12 July and other occasions the Orangemen marched with his lodge behind its flags and drums ... to show his strength in the places where he thought it would do most good. Where you could 'walk' you were dominant and the other things followed."

The tradition that the Orange marches represents is akin, then, to the tradition that persisted until the late Sixties in the southern states of the US that black people should ride at the back of the bus, or the tradition still "honoured" in parts of the world today that husbands have a right to beat wives. It's all about walking over others.

In this perspective, the authenticity of the Orange tradition, far from providing a defence of the practices associated with it, rather testifies to the deep-rootedness of a social evil.

This is by no means a new insight. As far back as 1857, two barristers appointed by the Lord Lieutenant to investigate a horrendous outbreak of

sectarian violence in Belfast on the previous 12 July, reported:

"The Orange system seems to us to have no other practical result than as a means of keeping up the Orange festivals, and celebrating them, leading as they do to violence, outrage, religious animosities, hatred between classes (sic) and, too often, bloodshed and loss of life ... We think it is well to consider whether there is any controlling necessity to keep it alive, notwithstanding the evils that, unfortunately, attend its existence."

Noting that it was "the lower orders" which seemed to do most of the fighting, suffering and even dying, they commented: "With them the war is a real one, personal suffering attends it with them, they are maimed in limb and rendered homeless by it. On them falls the misery of what brings advancement to the more exalted."

Not that, despite their best, or worst, efforts, there is real prospect of advancement for the leaders of Orangeism today. Or that any of them might properly be described as exalted.

Eamonn McCann is a journalist living in the Bogside district of Derry.

A man who would face both ways

Stephen Dorrell's dreams of leadership are apparent in his careful musings. But is he just all talk, asks Nicholas Timmins

Stephen Dorrell has yet to become one of the cartoonists' favourites. If he ever does, it will doubtless be the bags under his eyes on which they will focus. Right now, he has every right to have them.

He has just completed his first year as Secretary of State for Health. But in that time, aside from running one of the more demanding departments of state, Mr Dorrell has been working hard at his second job – positioning himself for the Tory Party leadership battle to come if the Conservatives go down at the general election.

There have been some remarkable speeches. The man once seen as Peter Walker's heir and so wringing wet that even Julian Critchley once described him as "excessively moderate" has been sounding increasingly Euro-sceptic and a harder man on social policy than many had believed him to be. Education and health, he has said, should remain universal services. But the rest of the welfare state he has airily dismissed as "primarily designed to offer a safety net to those who are unable to provide for themselves." In the cause of this careful positioning, he has even attempted to reclaim Margaret Thatcher as a One Nation Tory.

He cannot be serious. How can he be Margaret Thatcher as a One Nation Tory on the NHS when it is on record that she didn't believe in it as a universal service? Marvellous for the "great academics" and "terrible diseases" – as she herself once put it – and necessary for the poor. But, according to Kenneth Clarke, her health secretary at the time, she believed for the rest that people "should take responsibility for their own lives and insure for these things".

Dorrell equivocates. "That

may or may not be right," he says. The point is that that is not what happened. As Secretary of State for Education, Mrs Thatcher delivered a universalist education service. And as prime minister, she continued to provide a universalist NHS. "What you have to judge people by," Dorrell avers, "is not the ideas they muse over but the conclusions they come to in ordered decision-making." This is an important sentence.

His own musings, these days, sound a fair way from what is usually seen as traditional One-Nation Toryism. To the right of Kenneth Clarke, for example, who has said the basic pension is a key part of the welfare state and that the de-layered and downsized managers of Middle England want not just good health and education but a modernised welfare system that will help them retrain and find new employment. If Dorrell is saying all the rest of the welfare state is merely a safety net, surely that implies reducing the remainder to means tests? He unhesitatingly agrees. "That's not the implication," he says. "It's the assertion."

So he would means-test the basic state pension and child benefit? Caution enters here. The growth of private pensions means relatively few households rely only on the basic state pension. In that sense, therefore, it already is a safety net, although "we continue with the existing retirement pensions commitment".

What about child benefit? Would he favour means-testing it? He doesn't answer the question. Instead, he carefully repeats that the existing commitment "continues to be the commitment we are delivering".

So how about spending? It should come down, Dorrell says. But he won't indulge in

the targets which the right has been bandying about. "I do think we can get it down," he says, "but I've never believed that setting a target as a new nirvana makes sense." Indeed, he argues: "It may be that the time will come when we conclude we have cut it far enough. But it doesn't seem to me that is in prospect yet."

The difference between musings and actions seems to come in here. Dorrell may be positioning himself better with the right in order to be a possible standard-bearer for the left – perhaps a 45-year-old Dorrell against a 44-year-old Portillo if John Major loses next May.

To be a contender, Dorrell needs another good year, plus the public profile he has so far lacked but is beginning to acquire – both on his own account and at John Major's instigation. He is steadily becoming a Cabinet front man on issues well outside his departmental brief: last week, for example, on the constitution. On television, his open, reasoned, intellectual logic provides a friendlier Tory face to offset Brian Mawhinney's Rottweiler tendencies.

At National Heritage, his first Cabinet post, he did not shine, never quite recovering from appearing miffed, initially, at not getting something more heavyweight. At health, he's become more of a star.

He has defused some of the heat around the NHS reforms by becoming a "bureaucratic" – cutting away at the management costs the reforms have created. He has neatly finessed a potentially damaging confrontation with GPs into what may just become a constructive dialogue. The distinct flush of manager and civil servant in him – traits unusual in politicians – have focussed on a few critical NHS issues: emergency cover, intensive-care beds and mental health.

There have been blips. Redrawing the sensible drinking guidelines into what critics dubbed "a boozier's charter" was not the cleverest thing to do in the middle of the Government's anti-drink-driving campaign at Christmas. And there has been BSE. But predictions at the time that mad cow disease would make or break him have proved wide of the mark. It is Douglas Hogg, not Dorrell, who has been wounded by that flak.



Dorrell, who will not ask for more funding for the floundering NHS because it would reflect badly on him and his party

Photograph: Edward Sykes

The big outstanding question is whether in last year's spending round he won enough money for the NHS in this pre-election year. It is, he accepts, not only tight, but "tighter than usual". But new services are still being developed and he doesn't anticipate a major expansion in waiting times. No, he says, he hasn't thought of going back for more money – and he doesn't intend to.

"I don't believe that way of managing anything makes sense. Of course it is true in every organisation in every walk

of life at any time in history that if you had a bit more you could do a bit more. But the job of those charged with managing something for a given period is to use the resources at their disposal to deliver the best service they can."

It would reflect badly on the NHS, he says, if it had to go back for more cash. And badly on him? "Yes. It would mean we have made a mistake, and I don't believe that is true." And on that judgement, as much as any other, may ride Dorrell's chances of entering the frame.

An election Tony Blair would best avoid

The leader, the party, and the country at large can only lose if a vote is held for the Shadow Cabinet

Consider this unconsciously revealing remark by Doug Hoyle, chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party, on the *Today* programme yesterday. Asked by James Naughtie whether the prospect of the Labour Party consuming itself over the summer and early autumn in the divisive internal politicking of a Shadow Cabinet election would not delight the Tory chairman Brian Mawhinney, Mr Hoyle replied, after various platitudes about getting Dr Mawhinney out of office: "I'm afraid we don't run the Labour Party for Dr Mawhinney or anyone else."

OK. It was a slip. No doubt he didn't really intend to say it. Or if he did, he meant "or anyone else in the Conservative Party". And yet in those three little words all the introverted and residual tribalism which 16 years of opposition have still failed quite to extinguish is laid bare. Whether or not the Parliamentary Labour Party breaks its hallowed traditions by not having its annual elections this year, Mr Hoyle appears to be saying, is no one's business but its own. Perhaps not Tony Blair's and certainly not, even under a system which Mr Hoyle was adamant would decide who is and who isn't in the first Labour Cabinet for 17 years, yours or mine.

It is our concern, of course, and we'll come to why in a moment. But even if it wasn't, it's easy to make a case, in the Labour Party's own interests, of why it would be crazy to consume many weeks in the run-up to a general election in a prolonged internal campaign for who should be in the Shadow Cabinet.

Many of those insistent on securing elections are motivated as much by the desire to punish as to bring on to the Shadow Cabinet a new and favoured candidate. But however sweet the vengeance in booting Harriet Harman (for sending her son to a grammar school) or Jack Straw (for trying to outflank Michael Howard on law and order) off the Shadow Cabinet, it doesn't require much imagination to see what the Tories will do with such results.

So much for Tony Blair's modernisation, they will say that November day when the Shadow Cabinet results come out: "Today we've seen the real Labour Party at work."

The second and more powerful argument is that it's a rotten system, owing a good deal more to vote-trading and arcane regional and personal alliances than merit or even ideology. At least one innocent candidate in last year's Shadow Cabinet elections was



DONALD MACINTYRE

astonished to be told by another that he could give him the votes of half a dozen of his own supporters if he could have six back in return. The Labour MP Tony Wright yesterday used the analogy of an England football team picked by all the clubs in the league. "That's exactly what happens here – the equivalent of saving 'you have my goalkeeper, we'll take your centre forward'." Whatever else may be going for the system, it has, apart from its capacity to elect the obvious stars, an almost built-in bias against picking the best man or woman for the job.

But essentially that's Labour's problem, and here Mr Hoyle has half a point. What should concern the rest of us is the much larger issue of whether the Shadow Cabinet, elected on this ramshackle basis, should automatically become the Cabinet on day

one of a new Labour government. Standing Order E (1) of the PLP says that "on taking office as Prime Minister the Leader shall appoint as members of his Cabinet those who were elected members of the Parliamentary Committee [ie the Shadow Cabinet] at the dissolution and retained their seats in the new Parliament."

The standard view among MPs is that this means Blair is saddled with the Shadow Cabinet if and when he takes office but can then reshuffle them within a few weeks if he chooses. On Day One, therefore, of the first Labour government for 17 years, the newspapers swell with glowing profiles of the new regime. Then a month later Blair considers whether to risk causing an earthquake in the new government by sacking (say) Michael Meacher, Tom Clarke and goodness knows how many others. This is scarcely sensible politics.

And it matters to a much wider electorate than the Parliamentary Labour Party. Prime ministers, elected by their party and their country, are entrusted by the voters with the right to pick their own team. It's not an exaggeration to say it's part of the unwritten constitution of the country.

What's more, Blair will have Labour Party history on his side if he decides

to choose his own Cabinet from Day One. When Harold Wilson arrived at Downing Street in 1964, he grumbled about having to give "priority" – by convention rather than by rule – to his Shadow Cabinet. But there were only 12 of them. Half the entire Cabinet therefore were his own choice. Even when the new rule was introduced in 1981, at the height of the Bennite party reforms, it was assumed that a new Labour prime minister would be able to appoint half his own cabinet. It's only since then that the Shadow Cabinet has grown as large as, and even larger than, the real one.

Ideally, Blair would seek a majority in the Parliamentary Labour Party for cancellation of this year's Shadow Cabinet elections, and with it the 1981 rule requiring him to appoint the entire Shadow Cabinet to his first real Cabinet. But if he can't do the latter now, he has every reason to ignore the rule or demand that it is changed immediately he arrives in office.

Tony Blair hasn't declared his hand on whether there should be Shadow Cabinet elections this year, let alone on the taboo topic of Standing Order E (1). But the most pressing reason for not having the Shadow Cabinet elections is that they probably will be, and certainly ought to be, irrelevant.

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UK's national debt doubles under Major

DIANE COYLE,
SARAH HELM
and JOHN RENTOU

The national debt has nearly doubled to £360bn since John Major became Prime Minister in November 1990, putting Britain in danger of breaching the Maastricht Treaty limits that it must meet next year to keep open the option of joining the single European currency.

The Treasury's latest economic forecast, which will be published today, will show that because of higher-than-expected public sector borrowing Britain will struggle to meet the requirements on government borrowings and debt.

A shortfall in tax revenues has jeopardised repeated Government claims that it has done better than other European countries in getting borrowing on a downward path.

The Treasury will confirm that government borrowing will overshoot its targets this year by several billion pounds. And the PSBR target for 1997/98 is expected to be revised up by £5bn to around £20bn, which corresponds to a deficit only slightly

below the 3 per cent of GDP limit set by the Maastricht Treaty.

This would be more optimistic than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which recently predicted a government borrowing shortfall equivalent to 3.5 per cent of GDP.

Along with this year's re-

vised PSBR target of £27bn, this will take the national debt to over £360bn, twice the end-1990 level. The ratio of debt to GDP will rise above the current 54 per cent ratio, against the 60 per cent Maastricht ceiling.

The surge in government borrowing in the run-up to the 1992 election, compounded by the recession, account for the

soaring National Debt. The level of debt fell to a trough of £183bn at the end of 1990, having declined since 1988. The shortfall between government spending and revenues amounted to £187bn between 1991 and 1995.

Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, yesterday attempted to dampen down

hopes of pre-election tax cuts, saying they should be made only if public borrowing was firmly under control.

Mr Clarke said in Brussels: "The overwhelming - the vast majority - of Conservative backbenchers only want tax cuts if they are consistent with control of public spending."

Speaking after a meeting of

European finance ministers, he refuted suggestions his freedom to cut taxes was being limited by Brussels, which is pressing Britain to maintain tighter control of borrowing in the run-up to the single currency.

The EU finance ministers yesterday received a report from their monetary committee warning Britain to avoid tax cuts

if it wanted to keep open the option of joining monetary union, which means observing the strict Maastricht Treaty rules.

Mr Clarke took the committee's advice in his stride, saying: "His recommendations are entirely in line with our policy. It is not telling me anything I do not know already or that I do not already advocate."

Seizing on Mr Clarke's admission at the weekend that "my

boffins got their estimates wrong", he said that in total, public borrowing had been £44bn higher than was forecast in the pre-election Budget.

This meant interest rates were higher than they would otherwise be, he said.

Treasury officials recently admitted they were "baffled" by the £7bn shortfall in tax of -

enues last year, about half of which was accounted for by an unexpected undershoot in VAT revenues. Corporation tax was also £2bn lower than forecast, which Mr Brown said strengthened his argument for a windfall levy on the privatised utilities.

Stagnant manufacturing bodes well for prices

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

The path to a further cut in interest rates was cleared yesterday by figures showing that manufacturing output was flat in May, while both the cost of materials and prices charged at the factory gate declined last month.

The latest evidence of the stagnation in manufacturing came on the eve of publication of the Treasury's summer fore-

cast, which will make it clear that Chancellor Kenneth Clarke's leeway for tax cuts in the next Budget will be tiny.

Many City economists believe the Chancellor will exploit the window of opportunity to reduce the cost of borrowing.

"He has the luck of the devil with the figures," said David Hillier, an economist at BZW, predicting a further reduction in base rates when Mr Clarke meets the Governor of the Bank of England at the end of this month.

The 1.3 per cent June drop in the cost of materials was the biggest since September 1993.

The year-on-year decline of 4.8 per cent in "core" costs - excluding food, drink, tobacco and petroleum - was the lowest figure since the mid-1980s.

Prices that manufacturers charged at the factory gate fell in June for the second month running, declining 0.2 per cent compared with May. "Core" output price inflation fell to 2 per cent, returning to the mid-

1994 trough and the lowest since the 1960s.

"These are some of the lowest rates of producer price inflation in a decade, with no evidence of input price pressures," a Treasury spokesman said.

Yet manufacturing output was flat in May despite price discounting. Although 0.3 per cent higher in the three months to May compared with the previous three, it remained at the same level as a year earlier.

Food and drink, textiles and engineering output all advanced during the latest three months.

A surge in energy use due to the cold weather took total industrial output 1.4 per cent higher than a year earlier. Total output has risen 0.5 per cent in the latest three months.

Pessimists think industry will spend the rest of the year clearing the overhang of unsold stocks on the warehouse shelves. "Manufacturing output

might well fall for the remainder of this year," said Adam Cole at brokers James Capel.

That bodes well for the outlook for prices. The combination of falling materials costs and weak demand is expected to keep factory gate inflation low.

"This should act as a powerful force to ensure that the Government's inflation target is achieved during the first half of 1997," predicted David Walton at Goldman Sachs.

Yorkshire sold as cable consolidates

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

The long-awaited consolidation of the cable industry began in earnest yesterday, with the news that General Cable was poised to acquire the 50 per cent of Yorkshire Cable Group it did not already own, in an all-share deal worth £160m.

The move is the first sign of large-scale consolidation since last year's merger of Telewest and SBC Cablecomms, which had been expected to launch a rapid consolidation in the cable market.

The seller, Singapore Telecom, said yesterday it was acting on its stated strategy of shifting focus from the UK to the fast-moving Asian cable markets, particularly China.

General Cable, which owns large stakes in three regional cable operators, said it was the "right deal at the right time".

Philippe Galteau, chief executive, said the company would look at other acquisition targets, "provided they enhanced shareholder value".

Analysts said yesterday that the current 15 operators were likely to be reduced to just six by the end of next year.

The next high-profile change

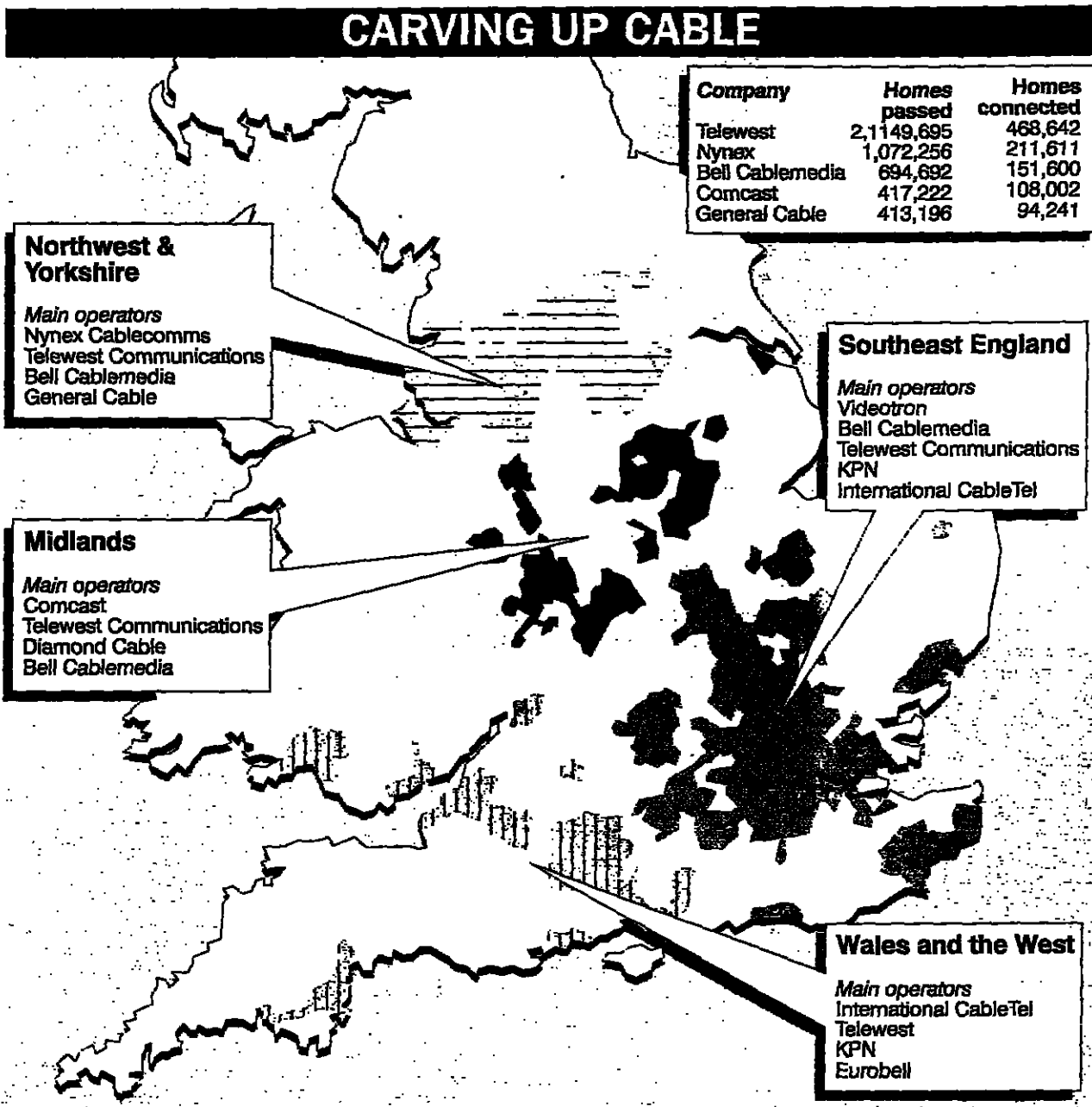
in ownership is expected within a few weeks, when Videotron, the Canadian cable giant, is likely to announce the sale of its 56 per cent interest in Videotron Holdings, the UK cable operator, probably to minority partner Bell Cablemedia.

The purchase of the 50 per cent stake in Yorkshire Cable by General Cable will be financed through the issue of 84.5 million shares, to raise £45m. Of these, 75 million will be made available in an international issue, aimed at raising cash for the group and to repay all or part of a loan made by Singapore Cable to Yorkshire.

Mr Galteau said the move was not necessarily aimed at creating a larger company. "For us, the criterion is not just getting bigger. The cable industry should concentrate on being local, and being quicker and more responsive."

But other cable operators are convinced that size is an advantage. In addition to the administrative and marketing cost savings, they point to the leverage bigger companies have in lining up programming for their cable TV networks.

Both Telewest and Nynex, the country's largest operators, have secured long-term contracts with BSkyB.



Airbus agrees key shake-up

MICHAEL HARRISON

Airbus Industrie, the four-nation European aircraft manufacturer, yesterday agreed to the most fundamental restructuring in its 36-year history by announcing that it is to become a single corporate entity by 1999.

The decision means that it will abandon its status as a Groupement d'Interet Economique, whereby the four companies in the consortium act as work-sharing partners, and move instead to full commercial status with Airbus operating as a public limited company with its own assets and equity.

The eventual aim is a global flotation so that Airbus can raise finance on the capital markets for new projects such as the proposed 600-seater super Jumbo, which would cost at least \$9bn to develop.

After a meeting of the Airbus supervisory board in Paris yesterday, the four partners - British Aerospace, Aerospaiale de France, Daimler Benz of Germany and CASA of Spain - said they would start negotiations immediately with the aim of reaching a binding agreement on the change of status by the end of this year.

There remain, however, huge obstacles to overcome, not least

the assets each of the four partners put into the new Airbus and how they are valued. BAe has a 20 per cent stake compared to 38 per cent for the German and French partners and 4 per cent for the Spanish.

BAe will argue that because the assets it is contributing are more profitable than those of either the French or the Germans, it should receive some financial compensation. BAe could be due as much as £500m from the three other partners.

Negotiations on the equity split are likely to dominate the next six months. The end of this year deadline set by Airbus for agreement on a Memorandum of Understanding may prove hopelessly optimistic.

Airbus has been pondering an overhaul of its structure - widely regarded as cumbersome and inefficient - for the best part of a decade but has always been held back by political friction and the differing philosophies of the four sponsor governments.

The consortium was set up in 1970 effectively as a marketing organisation with workshops divided up according to the stakes each partner holds. Converting to a plc would allow Airbus to contract out to the most competitive bidder.

Investors targeted in fraud boom

PETER RODGERS
Financial Editor

The pick up in the economy is leading to a boom in frauds against small private investors, the Serious Fraud Office warned yesterday.

The SFO has seen the number of large-scale investment frauds under investigation rise by more than 40 per cent, from 14 to 20 over the last year.

George Staple, the SFO director, warned investors to be on their guard, to check who they are dealing with and to take independent advice before parting with their money.

Including other smaller cases that now go to the SFO instead of the Crown Prosecution Service as a result of a change of Government policy, the total of investment frauds in the SFO

workload is now 39. Tougher City regulation is also driving the alleged fraudsters into unregulated areas, such as ostrich farming, where the absence of a financial watchdog makes it easier for them to operate.

Mr Staple said: "As the economy strengthens, there is more money available for investment schemes, some of which are going to be fraudulent."

The SFO's annual report also reveals that Mr Staple has not dropped inquiries into the Barings affair, despite his refusal to press for the extradition of Nick Leeson while he was in Germany.

The report says: "We are carefully considering whether grounds exist for further criminal inquiries into other aspects of the case in England."

The SFO is believed to be keeping a close eye on the in-

quiry into Barings by the Commons Treasury Select Committee, where one witness, Ron Baker, used parliamentary privilege to make public accusations of a cover-up by named former colleagues. It is also on the alert for any new evidence from Singapore. The watching brief is not thought to be aimed at prosecuting Mr Leeson when he returns from his six-year prison sentence.

Mr Staple's report also makes clear that he has not dropped another high-profile case, that against Asil Nadir, the former Polly Peck head who is now in northern Cyprus. "A warrant has been issued for his arrest and we are ready to proceed with the prosecution against him when he returns or is returned to the jurisdiction," says the SFO.

The total case book rose from

52 in April 1995 to 70 at the end of March, and the money involved has risen £1bn to £3bn over the last year. Further cases, including Sumitomo, have since raised the number to 77.

In 10 out of 11 SFO trials during the year the principal defendants were convicted - the odd one out being the high-profile Maxwell trial.

The rise in case load is partly due to the threshold for an SFO inquiry being lowered to £1m from £5m. But Mr Staple's budget has fallen £600,000 this year to £10.1m and he said he was pressing for a switch of funds from the CPS to the SFO.

The report discloses that the SFO issued 83 section 20 notices last year on behalf of 15 foreign investigatory bodies under new powers to help fight international fraud.

£670,000 South West pay-off under fire

The former managing director of South West Water, Bill Fraser, quit the company earlier this year with a pay-off worth £670,000, it emerged yesterday, writes Michael Harrison.

The compensation deal, together with £224,000 in salary and pension benefits, brought his total payments last year to just under £900,000.

Ian McCartney, Labour's employment spokesman, immediately attacked the "ridiculous lottery-style pay-out", saying it showed the need for a windfall tax on the privatised utilities.

"This money should be getting our youngsters into jobs, not padding out the pockets of utility fat cats," he added. "There should be an urgent inquiry into these payments by the regulator."

South West, which is facing two hostile takeover bids from rival water companies, said Mr Fraser received compensation for loss of office of £336,000. The 1996 report and accounts show that he is also entitled to cash in 116,000 share options showing a paper profit of £284,000. In addition he is receiving a £50,000, 12-month consultancy fee from South West for "access to his international major capital projects experience".

Mr Fraser joined South West in 1990 a year after privatisation and left in February. The company got into trouble last summer after water supplied to the Torbay area was found to contain a bug which made it unfit for human consumption.

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STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
FTSE 100	3741.50	-1.70	-0.0	3857.10	3639.50
FTSE 250	4339.50	-27.70	-0.6	4588.00	4015.30
FTSE 350	1881.50	-3.30	-0.2	1945.40	1815.00
FT Small Cap	2171.98	-14.12	-0.6	2244.36	1954.06
FT All Share	1894.78	-3.97	-0.2	1924.17	1791.95
New York	5591.83	+3.89	+0.1	5778.00	5692.54
Tokyo	21924.94	-307.48	-1.4	22668.80	18734.70
Hong Kong	10890.05	-287.08	-2.6	11594.99	10204.67
Frankfurt	2251.04	-32.45	-1.3	2363.49	2253.36

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Short sterling	UK medium gilt	US long bond	3 month	6 month	12 month
5.50	6.10	7.84	8.10	8.06	8.18
5.38	6.25	7.06	6.04	7.19	6.52
0.44	1.13	3.36	2.59	-	-
3.28	3.63	6.80	6.89	7.14	-
CURRENCIES					
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	£/A\$	£/NZ\$	£/S\$
1.5543	0.6434	1.5890	0.6434	0.6293	0.6274
1.5670	0.6423	1.5940	0.6423	0.6274	0.6274
2.3748	0.1501	2.2227	0.1501	0.1501	0.1501
172.250	10.182	138.684	10.182	10.182	10.182
86.7	83.7	83.7	83.7	83.7	83.7
OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Latest	1 yr Ago	5 yr Ago	10 yr Ago	20 yr Ago
OE Brand	19.88	-0.06	16.02	152.9	2.2pc
RPI	132.3	+2.2pc	149.8	11 July	-
Gold \$	382.00	+0.25	385.95	130.3	+1pc
Gold £	245.74	+0.32	242.89	126.2	26 July
Base Rates	5.75pc	5.75	-	-	-



A lack of vision is blighting corporate Britain

There is something rotten at the core of corporate Britain and, yes, the City may be part of it. No, this is not going to be another rant about executive pay and perks but it is about that other great bug bear - short-termism. Lack of imagination, lack of strategy, lack of vision, lack of anything very much at all among the time servers of the British boardroom. This is not necessarily the fault of the new generation of cost cutting, rationalising, downsizing, managers, for vision is the last thing the City seems to expect or want of them these days. Nonetheless, they have become part of it. So much so that they now scarcely seem to know any better.

The fact that Guinness could have thought merging with Grand Metropolitan even remotely possible, let alone desirable, is just the latest evidence of sickness at the heart of our major companies. Has Guinness, and its beleaguered chairman, Tony Greener, taken leave of their senses? What could Britain possibly have to gain by allowing its two major liquor companies to merge, apart, that is, from a bit of short-lived shareholder value for investors in Guinness? Even that is questionable enough, and yet Guinness allowed this ludicrous idea to reach the stage of fully fledged proposal from its lead City adviser, Lazard Brothers.

Now of course it is the case that fee-hungry merchant bankers are always on the lookout for a good wheeze that might generate lucrative business. A proposal from a

merchant banker doesn't amount to a plan of action for the company itself. Furthermore, all big companies dream of acquiring their major competitor. Put together the best and the second best and what a team you would create, most executives have wildly imagined at some stage in their careers. But it doesn't work in football nor does it work in business. Put together the best and the second best and you generally end up with, well, the best minus the second best. And that's if you are lucky.

Guinness would have gone through the following thought process before finally rejecting this absurd proposal. How could we possibly persuade the Government to back a merger that would give us more than half the British liquor industry? Answer: Britain needs a national liquor champion, capable of competing with the best in the world on the international stage. So what if domestic competition is harmed a bit, it will make us that much more competitive internationally.

What nonsense. Unfortunately this has become a lamentably familiar justification for fundamentally harmful corporate empire-building across a whole range of different industries. Most of us thought it to begin with, but like the connected concept of corporate globalisation, it begins to look more flawed with every deal. This is especially the case in the liquor business, where Britain is already a highly successful interna-

tional player with three of the top five companies in the world. The idea that one should be allowed to takeover one of the others because it has run out of ideas on what else to do could only really happen in Britain.

Guinness has a very real problem of where to go from here. Its shares have underperformed by an appalling margin in recent years, not because it is an unsuccessful company, but because it has run out of steam and has no obvious way of stoking up the fire. Furthermore, it has an awkward shareholder, in the shape of Bernard Arnault of France. More keen than most to see some short-term return on his money.

But this is not the way, nor is it the way for most British companies. Long-term shareholders - and the City is meant to be full of them these days - ultimately gain very little from consolidating mergers. Management need to be persuaded to come up with long-term objectives and targets, then they need to be backed with a degree of patience and commitment that is capable of ignoring even a lengthy blip in the share price.

That's the real way forward and although it may seem like a naive dream, it's a good sight less naive than the investor who continues to think that acquisition strategy is a reasonable substitute for hard graft, vision and a proper sense of business purpose and goals.

Simon Lewis, the newly named director of corporate affairs for British Gas Energy, is variously described as suave, arrogant, politically ambitious and tall, though not necessarily in that order. He is also presumably very nicely off thanks to having been bumped away from the top PR job at NatWest to join the gasmen.

With his arrival in September, British Gas will be full of more spin doctors than you can shake a stick at, though so far the weight of numbers does not seem to have helped very much. The distinction for Mr Lewis is that he will have to earn his crust since the words poisoned and chalice might have been invented for the role he is taking on.

If and when British Gas is demerged, BGE will be the poor relation to the pipeline business TransCo. It will not make much money, it will not pay any dividends, and it may not make it into the Footsie. What it will have is £40bn of liabilities in the shape of British Gas's North Sea take-or-pay contracts and a declining market share as the domestic gas business is opened to full competition from 1998. We do not know exactly what Mr Lewis will earn since he will not be on the board and his salary will not therefore be disclosable. But it is entirely appropriate that he be paid a king's ransom since, as is so often the case, the scale of his task is likely to run in inverse proportion to the prospects for the company.

Mr Lewis says he was drawn by the

excitement and challenge. That either suggests he will bring to the job the sure-footedness that British Gas's PR has long cried out for or that he is labouring under a massive misapprehension.

Sam Chisholm at BSkyB and his alter ego at News Corp, Rupert Murdoch, are hardly the types to sit back and let the grass grow under their feet. With the original push into continental European digital TV via a joint venture with Bertelsmann among others now all but dead and buried, they've not footed it to the competition, the Bavarian media tycoon Leo Kirch.

If all goes according to plan, and this time they are hoping it will, BSkyB ends up with 49 per cent of Kirch's digital enterprise plus an option to take 25 per cent of its sports channel, which has just clinched rights to the World Cup. No money changes hands for the time being but Sky is required to put up an unspecified proportion of the development costs. This is high risk stuff, a bit like Sky itself in the early years, but it does demonstrate both a determination and an ability to move beyond the narrow confines of domestic franchise. Though ageing and nearly blind, Mr Kirch cuts a powerful figure on the German media scene. A close friendship and association with Chancellor Kohl makes him arguably a better ally than Bertelsmann's Michael Doremann. BSkyB looks like confounding the sceptics yet again.

Sky links up with owner of television rights to World Cup

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB yesterday pulled a digital TV deal from the ashes of its failed alliance with Bertelsmann, confirming a high-stakes venture with Bavarian mogul Leo Kirch to launch digital TV in Germany later this month.

The new alliance, which leaves Bertelsmann and Canal Plus, Sky's former partners, out in the cold for now, will see Murdoch join forces with the owner of the broadcast rights to 15,000 movies and 50,000 hours of television, along with the exclusive rights to the World Cup of football in 2002 and 2006.

Sky sources reported yesterday that no money will change hands, and stressed that the Kirch Group will manage the digital platform in Germany. However, BSkyB will jointly finance the launch, scheduled for 28 July, and will provide transponder space on an Astra satellite and marketing and programming expertise.

The deal will see BSkyB take up to 49 per cent of DFL, Kirch's digital platform in Germany. Sky is also angling for a 25 per cent stake in DSF, Kirch's sports channel.

Sam Chisholm, chief execu-

tive of BSkyB, said: "This is a major step forward in the new television world."

It is understood that the negotiations leading to yesterday's announcement were started within the past month, and that both sides were eager to reach a deal.

The new alliance could be a direct threat to Bertelsmann, the German media giant, which late last week finalised its controversial deal with CLT to merge the two companies' television assets. That arrangement helped scupper the grand pan-European alliance grouping Sky, Havas, Bertelsmann and Canal Plus, the French pay-TV giant, earlier this year.

Canal Plus had been upset at CLT's plans to compete in the digital TV market in France, and questioned why Bertelsmann, an alliance partner, would back the rival company. Mr Murdoch, for his part, was concerned about what Sky insiders have called "foot dragging" on the part of Bertelsmann in the preparation of the four-way alliance.

BSkyB confirmed yesterday that it had "withdrawn from the proposed agreement" with Canal Plus, Bertelsmann, and Havas, also a French media company. However, the com-

pany said that both Kirch and BSkyB "are prepared to admit other participants which bring strategic value to the project of a digital platform in Germany."

It is understood that the German digital joint venture, which will feature 17 channels of mostly German-language programming, will have no effect on Sky's own digital plans in the UK. BSkyB has promised to launch a digital satellite service with up to 200 channels by the end of next year.

Gottfried Zmuck, chief executive of DFL, said: "With BSkyB, we have a partner who will enhance the development of our digital platform in Germany with its experience as Europe's most successful pay television operator."

Media analysts said yesterday that the Kirch digital network had an advantage over other potential competitors because of Mr Kirch's control of programming rights.

"He has an ironclad grip on the programming rights in Germany," said one senior industry source.

With partners ISL, the marketing company, Kirch last week promised \$2.2bn for the rights to the World Cup events in 2002 and 2006. It is under-



High stakes: Leo Kirch has broadcast rights to 15,000 movies, 50,000 hours of TV and rights to the World Cup

stood that BSkyB intends to negotiate for UK rights to at least some of the matches, and is expected to have a better chance of securing a deal following the announcement of the German joint venture.

Sky sources indicated that the alliance with Kirch could be expanded in other parts of Europe. Kirch has 43 per cent of

commercial channel SAT1, 25 per cent of Premier, the analogue pay-TV service, and 10 per cent of Mediaset, Silvio Berlusconi's media conglomerate.

Bertelsmann, which has a long-term strategic alliance with Canal Plus, may yet join the Murdoch-Kirch platform, analysts said last night. They questioned whether there was room

for two digital services in Germany, where just 3 per cent of homes now subscribe to pay-TV, compared to about 25 per cent of British homes.

Bertelsmann has said it would launch its own digital platform, using a competing technology, by the end of the year. However, the deal with CLT, which brings together

mainstream TV operations in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Britain and France, may end up focusing on terrestrial TV. The battle for the German market is the first stage in a wider war to dominate the European pay-TV sector. It is estimated as many as 33 million homes could subscribe by the year 2004.

BoS says predators will fail

PETER RODGERS
Financial Editor

Bank of Scotland yesterday made clear that any potential predator would be firmly rebuffed, as it began a two-week international roadshow to help Standard Life sell £840m worth of its shares to institutions.

Sir Bruce Patullo, Governor of Bank of Scotland, said: "If there is a predator they know they are going to have a pretty hostile fight and that it's probably not worth it at the end of the day."

When Standard Life announced it was selling most of its 31.5 per cent stake in Bank of Scotland Sir Bruce reacted angrily to the surprise news that his major shareholder was bowing out.

But the hatchet has now been buried. After Sir Bruce's protest, Standard agreed not to sell the shares as a block to another investor or through a bought deal by an investment bank.

Instead they are to be marketed in an international offer by BZW, which is selling 29 per cent of the bank for Standard, which is keeping another 2.5 per cent as an investment. The offer of 351 million shares includes 46 million to be used to stabilise the market.

BZW is to allocate the shares according to price but with special preference for large investing institutions that will be long-term holders.

Hanson hits seven-year low in run up to drastic autumn demergers

PATRICK TOOHER

Hanson's shares hit a seven-year low yesterday after the Anglo-American industrial conglomerate unveiled accounting changes that cut the value of its coal and mineral reserves by almost £3bn and knocked £70m a year off profits at its Peabody coal unit.

The company, which is in the throes of splitting itself into four separately quoted firms, said the asset write-downs would not affect operational cash flow or future dividend policy.

However, Hanson's shares came under renewed selling pressure within minutes of the news and dipped to 166.5p. And despite staging a recovery later in the session, the shares still closed at the seven-year low - 171.5p, down 0.5p.

The shares have been in the doldrums ever since Lord Hanson stunned the City earlier this year with his break-up plan. Commenting on the share price weakness, Hanson vice-chairman Christopher Collins said: "The market hasn't yet seen full information about the new companies. It has caused some uncertainty and there has been some selling by yield funds."

In a demerger update, Hanson said it remained on track to spin off its Millennium Chemicals and Imperial Tobacco units in October, while unbundling the new energy group, to be called The Energy Company plc, should be completed in January 1997. That will leave a Hanson "rump" to focus on building materials.

Hanson said Peabody's op-



Lord Hanson: Four-way split plans stunned the City

erating profits will be £70m a year lower due to changes in the accounting treatment of provisions for coal-related illness and environment funds. Future payments due to the US Federal Coal Industry Black Lung and Abandoned Mined Land Funds total £1.2bn. Under the new accounting policy, payments will be recognised as taxes and treated as a revenue charge based on production volumes, in line with US coal company practice.

In turn the book value of mineral reserves for Hanson's cornerstone construction and materials division has been slashed by £2.3bn to £1.3bn while the value of coal reserves at Peabody has been cut by £600m to £1.5bn.

Hanson said both reductions "will have no impact on opera-

tional cash flow but will cause a small reduction in future depletion charges and a consequent small increase in profit."

The Anglo-American conglomerate added that clearance had been given by the Inland Revenue for the demerger of its chemical and tobacco units to be tax-free for shareholders. US counsel also advised a similar scenario for American investors.

Hanson also disclosed that fees payable to financial advisers involved in the demerger, which include Rothschilds and Hoare Govett, are expected to be less than £20m.

A series of shareholder roadshows in the US and Britain to drum up institutional interest is planned for September before the first demergers occur the following month.

IN BRIEF

• A total of 240,000 small investors have so far applied for £500m-worth of shares in the nuclear generator British Energy, making the public offer almost fully subscribed. The Government's advisers said yesterday. A third of the shares in the offer are being held back for the public, although this may be increased to 50 per cent if demand proves strong. The level of interest in British Energy is running 10 per cent above that for Railtrack which closed more than three-times subscribed. The deadline for applications in the public offer is noon tomorrow while the international offer, which will set the price of the fully-paid shares, closes Friday.

• Unigate, the dairies to road transport group, said it was still looking for a large acquisition after it announced the £77.3m purchase of the European margarine and spreads business of Kraft, part of Philip Morris of the US. The latest buy, which includes the Vitalite and Golden Churn brands, will raise its share of the UK market from 14.2 per cent to 25.3 per cent, still some way short of the 44.6 per cent held by Unilever's Van den Bergh offshoot. Unigate said there would be cost savings from integrating the Kraft businesses with the existing St Ivel operation.

• Dairy Crest revealed that its chairman, Michael Dowdall, is entitled to a bonus of £50,000 on the company obtaining a stock market listing before next April. The former marketing arm of the old Milk Marketing Board is coming to market next month. Mr Dowdall, who also chairs Geest, is paid a basic salary of £132,613 and will be entitled to share options worth four-times that figure. Chief executive John Houlston receives a basic salary of £232,000 plus bonus.

• Dorling Kindersley, the print and electronic publisher, announced the departure of John Sargent, its US chief executive, who is joining St. Martin's Press, a subsidiary of US publishing giant Macmillan. A spokesman said: "He is an excellent executive, and we are sorry to see him go." He added that Mr Sargent, whose parents were both in publishing, had long wanted to return to a "traditional" company. DK has asked headhunters to begin the search for a replacement. Shares lost 14p to 573p on the news.

• Electronic Retailing Systems, a supplier of electronic shelf labelling systems, is to become the first company quoted on the US Nasdaq exchange to obtain a listing on the UK's Alternative Investment Market. The Connecticut-based group is raising £7.7m in two placings which will capitalise the company at £30.5m when the shares start trading on 11 July. The company supplies liquid crystal pricing displays for supermarkets which replace paper price tags and provide for price changes to be effected centrally.

• Somerfield's prospectus due out later this week is expected to show a price range for its stock market flotation of between £50m-£70m. The supermarket group will also provide more details about its financial performance. In the year to 27 April 1996 operating profits rose by 43 per cent to £10.5m.

• Allders' sales in the nine weeks to 29 June were 21 per cent ahead of last year and 13 per cent up on a like-for-like basis. Shareholders approved the proposed £160m sale of Allders International, the duty free shops business, to Nuance International Holding, a subsidiary of SwissAir.

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Tomkins set to unlock Gates

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

Tomkins, which embraces everything from bread to petrochemical valves, has stuck doggedly to its conglomerate roots, despite the ending of the City's love affair with the sector. It has been rewarded with a share price which has underperformed the rest of the market for five long years. Although it may be too early to call a change in sentiment, there are straws in the wind which look more hopeful than for some time.

Chief among those is perhaps the potential of Gates, the world's leading maker of automotive belts and hoses, for which Tomkins is paying \$1.36bn. After six months waiting for the various approvals, that deal is set to go through at the end of July, giving Tomkins chairman Greg Hutchings and his team the green light for a classic realisation job.

Profits at Gates have doubled to \$40.3m in the past three years, but margins are well under Tomkins' level. While there has been plenty of investment at the operating end of the business, paternalistic management has left "mom and pop store" reporting systems and tax balance sheet controls. Installing Tomkins' tight controls should provide an immediate boost to margins by weeding out unprofitable lines, while the company talks ambitiously of savings of around \$250m from tightening up working capital, particularly stock, at Gates.

That cash flow will come in handy as Tomkins develops the existing product base and expands into new areas. However, Mr Hutchings and his team still have to convince the City. Judging by yesterday's meagre 3p rise in the share price to 251p, the market, at least, has grown bored with Tomkins' consistent earnings record. The group unveiled pre-tax profits increased by 6.6 per cent to \$32.5m in the year to 27 April, which fed through to earnings per share growth of similar order. The results easily beat the company's forecast in May and mean Tomkins' average annual average earnings increase has outperformed the UK average by nearly 24 percentage points over the past 12 years.

The figures were held back by the particularly severe and prolonged US winter, which cut sales of Murray lawnmowers by a quarter in the peak season of March and April. Operating profits from the professional, garden and leisure division slumped 34 per cent, but some of that should be made up.

The potential for Gates was again reflected in the bread and food divisions which represent the old Ranks Hovis McDougall acquired in 1992. Margins have been raised 30 per cent and around \$200m has been invested from cash squeezed out of the business.

Low & Bonar wraps up profits

Low & Bonar, the packaging group, stands out in a sector strewn with high-profile casualties of the volatile raw material price cycle. While investors in Rexam, De La Rue and Arjo Wiggins nurse losses incurred from a series of profit warnings, shares in the Dundee-based packager have continued an impressive run that has seen them almost quadruple in value in the last five years.

New chief executive Jim Heilig, who succeeded Jim Leng in October, can justifiably boast that latest interim results "underline our success in concentrating on profitable niches within our packaging, plastics and specialist materials business and our strategy of balancing our group over a number of

segments to minimize cyclicality". A broad geographic mix between Europe and north America has also helped.

In the six months to May, pre-tax profits edged 6 per cent higher to \$26.2m on sales 4 per cent down to \$211m, depressed by lower raw material costs. More significantly, margins continued on their upward path, rising from 11.7 per cent to 13 per cent. Earnings per share rose by a tenth to 18.43p, helped by the purchase last year of a 21 per cent US minority holding.

The results were struck in what Mr Heilig terms "challenging market conditions". In general, Low & Bonar was under pressure to pass on lower raw material prices. In particular, it had a tough time in the US, where packaging margins slipped as exceptionally bad winter weather held back cement sack sales to the construction industry.

Given a strong balance sheet - gearing is just 10 per cent - acquisitions are very much on Mr Heilig's mind. His appetite for expanding into higher-margin plastic and specialty materials businesses remains, despite Bonar's failure to buy Rotronics, a US plastic mouldings supplier, for \$31m earlier

this year. The deal would have doubled US earnings, but fell through when Rotronics claimed to have found a third party willing to pay more. Mr Heilig has yet to establish who the mystery bidder was and lawyers are on the case.

Francesca Rakeigh at broker Panmure Gordon sticks with her full-year forecast of \$57m, implying a sub-market multiple of 13, with the shares down 3p at 529p. A core holding in the sector.

Kenwood loses its market veneer

Kenwood Appliances, whose former chief executive Tim Parker left last year to run C & J Clark, remains a name to conjure with in the field of kitchen appliances. Sadly, the brand has lost its luster with the stock market. Floated at 285p four years ago, the shares have spent most of the past 18 months below their issue price and today languish at 210p, up 1p yesterday.

The company has been squeezed by sluggish consumer spending, high raw material prices and competition from the Far East. But Kenwood's fall from grace mainly stemmed from the rights funded acquisition of Ariete, an Italian appliance maker, in November 1994.

Yesterday's results for the year to 4 April, showing pre-tax profits up by 16 per cent to £15.6m, suggests that at least some of the market's doubts were well founded. The figures were at the bottom of the range and Ariete's first full year was a pretty mixed bag, with very strong first-half sales falling away in the important second half, which includes Christmas, and plummeting by 23 per cent in the final quarter. Meanwhile, the UK remained difficult for much of the year, although there were signs of improvement nearer the end of the period.

One bright spot was the Mizushi start-up Italian air-conditioning operation, which had a storming first year that may eventually help offset some of the difficulties at Ariete. But this year looks like being another year of consolidation.

Kenwood is developing new products which should help counter pressure on pricing, while it is moving some manufacturing to a low cost factory in China. But a rising tax charge will slow earnings growth in 1996/97. Profits of around £17.5m would put the shares on a forward multiple of just 9. Sentiment will not be improved by talk yesterday of another paper-funded acquisition, possibly in the US. High enough.

Saddling motorists with striking right balance

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK



On yer bikes: Newer models are no doubt easier to use

by the delectable Joanna Lumley.

Hanson has found that dreaming up new corporate names can be tricky as well. Now that Hanson is splitting into four new separately quoted companies, it needs a name for the energy division which includes Eastern Electricity.

Christopher Collins, Hanson vice-chairman, says that it has taken several weeks to settle on a name, since the first choice, Energy Resources, was found to have been taken already by an Australian company. They ended up with The Energy Group, which Mr Collins insists has the virtue of simplicity - it tells you what the company does. It's also a bit flat - hopefully, unlike the company's growth prospects.

Lively scenes at yesterday's press conference to herald Standard Life's sale of its stake in Bank of Scotland. As journalists descended on the presentation, lawyers for Standard Life insisted that two writers be excluded - both from the FT. The company's reason was that the FT is published in the US, and under American securities regulations Standard Life would be unable to talk to the FT journalists on the record. To their credit, George Graham, the banking correspondent, and a chap from the Lex column marched resolutely in. Will the American side of the sale now be pulled? Watch this space.

Greg Hutchings, chief executive of Tomkins, explains that the company's sales of lawn mowers in the US were hit by bad winter weather which extended into the spring, the peak season for buying Murray mowers. There is a silver lining though, Mr Hutchings adds.

Tomkins has compensated with booming sales of snow blowers, noisy contraptions much beloved of Americans because they blow all the snow on your front path into your neighbour's garden. Such was the demand last winter that one blower was hijacked in New York.

Jim Heilig, chief executive at Low & Bonar, says his company was also hit by the severe US winter with a fall-off in demand for sacks, cement bags, glass seed bags and the like - but saw much higher demand for salt and grit bags to deal with America's snowed-out roads.

At the very least there seems to be a growth market in silver linings. Astronomers are currently reporting that sun spot activity is at a 30-year high. It all fits.

ITN sale ends seven-year hitch

MATHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

Media giants Granada and Carlton finally complied yesterday with Government ownership regulations, selling an excess 12 per cent shareholding in ITN, the national news service that makes News at Ten, to Lord Hollick's United News & Media.

The deal, which values ITN at £106m, brings Carlton and Granada's stake in the company to 20 per cent each and United's to 17 per cent.

United, owner of the Anglia and Meridian ITV franchises, as

well as Express newspapers, already owned 5 per cent of ITN.

The announcement ends a seven-year saga at ITN, which has been the subject of negotiations, shifting alliances and bitter battles among leading ITV companies who take the ITN news service.

"It is excellent news that the seven-year controversy surrounding ITN's ownership is resolved," Stuart Purvis, ITN's chief executive, said. "It is particularly good news that it has been resolved in this way."

Carlton and Granada, which held 36 per cent each of ITN un-

til earlier this year, having inherited stakes following their acquisitions, respectively, of Central and London Weekend Television, sold 10 per cent each to Daily Mail & General Trust in April, taking their stakes to 26 per cent each. Yesterday's sale to United brings them down to the 20 per cent limited stipulated in the Broadcasting Act of 1990.

The remaining shareholders of ITN are Reuters with 18 per cent and Scottish Television with 5 per cent.

The Independent Television Commission, which regulates the TV industry, had criticised

Granada and Carlton for holding on to their excess shares through "dead-locked" companies, complaining that the arrangements were not in the spirit of the law.

But a Granada source defended the length of time it took to sell off the excess shares, saying it was commercially unfair to be forced to reduce the stake.

The scaling down of the Granada and Carlton positions coincided with negotiations over the renewal of ITN's lucrative contract with the ITV network, under which the news provider was paid £57m a year.

Eurocopy falls as family sells shares worth £7m

Eurocopy, the photocopier group, yesterday announced that a trust acting for the three daughters of its chairman, Cyril Gay, has sold nearly 10 million shares in the company for more than £7m, writes Nic Cienfuti.

Shares in the company dropped 16 pence to 74p after the announcement, which reduces the Gay family's combined holding in the firm to 14 million shares, or about 29 per cent.

However, Mr Gay said yesterday he had given an undertaking that no further share placing would be made by himself or his children's trust for two

years. He said: "I have three daughters aged 28, 30 and 32 and like a good father, years before we floated, I passed shares on their behalf to an offshore trust."

"They are now old enough to look after themselves and with the co-operation of the trustees, have decided to divest about two-thirds of their holdings. Although Eurocopy is a good investment, it is not ideal to invest all your money in one share. The aim will be to diversify the trust's holding."

Mr Gay said the family's remaining holding meant there was little danger any outside bidder could try to gain control.

COMPANY RESULTS				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
AG Barr (t)	46.5m (41.4m)	1.01m (1.82m)	3.82p (6.37p)	3p (2p)
Beverly (f)	4.15m (1.93m)	-3.82m (-1.23m)	-6.64p (-1.15p)	nil (-)
Becknell (f)	30.4m (20.0m)	0.91m (0.51m)	3.1p (2.7p)	0.5p (nil)
Pire Holdings (f)	30.3m (21.5m)	1.8m (0.31m)	2.78p (0.47p)	nil (-)
Ivory & Stone (f)	17.3m (16.0m)	6.5m (5.9m)	13.71p (12.95p)	8.25p (7.5p)
Kennel Associates (f)	197m (142m)	15.8m (13.5m)	22.8p (22.4p)	10p (10p)
Low & Bonar (t)	211m (219m)	26.2m (24.8m)	18.43p (17.77p)	4p (3.8p)
Wooling (f)	67.1m (64.4m)	5.1m (3.5m)	1.63p (0.85p)	0.85p (0.85p)
Magnum (f)	1.84m (1.05m)	0.31m (0.10m)	0.73p (0.83p)	nil (-)
Shield Diagnostics (f)	5.83m (4.76m)	0.28m (0.28m)	1.48p (1.48p)	nil (-)
Tandem (f)	3.60m (3.72m)	322m (303m)	18.7p (17.46p)	9.95p (8.65p)
Cashers (f)	61.2m (63.9m)	2.1m (1.8m)	9.72p (8.54p)	3p (3p)
Henry Houlden's (t)	2.0m (1.67m)	0.17m (0.13m)	1.3p (1p)	1p (1p)
KIC (t)	148.4m (147.4m)	15.85m (15.54m)	163.5p (161.7p)	16p (-)
Merrydown (f)	37.1m (23.5m)	2.03m (2.77m)	10.83p (17.85p)	4.5p (1p)
Prospect Inds (t)	30.2m (30.1m)	-3.05m (10.39m)	-1.03p (-3.70p)	nil (-)

(f) - Final (t) - Interim

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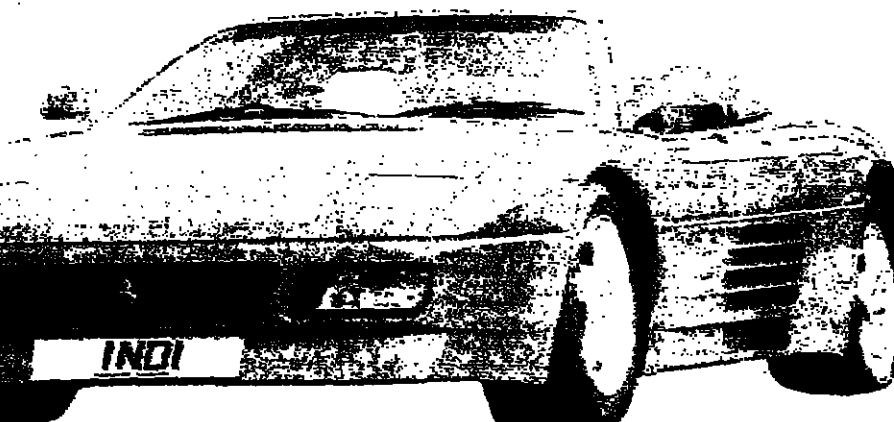
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How to enter
To enter our Ferrari prize draw you

must collect four differently numbered tokens from the eight we will be printing in The Independent and the Independent on Sunday.

Yesterday in The Independent we printed Token 3, today we are printing Token 4. You will need to send your tokens with a completed entry form which is printed today and will be printed again on Saturday.

Terms and conditions
1. To enter our Ferrari Prize Draw you need to collect 4 differently numbered tokens and complete an entry form.

2. The closing date for entries is 26 July 1996. Send to: The Independent/Ferrari Prize Draw, PO Box 204, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 1TZ.

3. For missing tokens or an entry form, please send separate SAE's to: The Independent/Ferrari Token Request or Entry Form, PO Box 92, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL7 1BT. Only 4 tokens are available per application. Requests must be received by first post 19 July 1996.

4. Employees and agents of Newspaper Publishing Plc or those of any other national newspaper company or any firm connected with the promotion are not eligible to take part, neither are

their relatives nor members of their families or households.

5. The winner must co-operate for publicity purposes if required and accept that his/her name and photograph will be published in the paper.

6. Photocopies of tokens not accepted. 7. The promoter reserves the right in their absolute discretion to disqualify any entry or competitor, nominee, or to add to, or waive any rules.

8. No correspondence will be entered into. Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of receipt. The promoter will not take responsibility for entries lost or damaged in the post.

9. Readers may enter more than once, but only one entry can be entered per postal application.

10. The prize will be available to the winner for one month between August and December 1996.

11. The winner must be between 25-70 years of age, have held a full driving licence for a minimum of 2 years and have a satisfactory driving record.

12. The prize draw is open to residents of the UK and the Irish Republic. The prize will be as stated, with no cash alternative. The Editor's decision is final. Promoter: Newspaper Publishing Plc, One Canada Square, London E14 5DL.

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Wall St tumble would not mean the end of the world

It is not a bad rule of thumb that when experts agree, one should expect the reverse to happen. Never the less, the expectation is so general that it really does deserve to be taken seriously. The valuation of Wall Street on most measures is at the extreme top end of the scale. The Bank Credit Analyst valuation indicator, shown in the graph, is particularly worrying, but the BCA "fair value" indicator, shown below it, is also well out of line. Put at its lowest, there is a serious possibility that Wall Street will fall sharply before the year is out. The tremors of recent trading will then be seen as early warning of the main shock to come. So even if past experience suggests that the outcome will still surprise, the possibility of a sharp fall in share prices does at least seem serious enough for it to be worth proceeding to the next question: so what?

The central issue here is whether there is a clear linkage between what happens in financial markets and what happens in the real economy. One link is the cross-border one: does a fall on Wall Street lead to a world-wide crash? That, I think, can be quite easily answered by taking two reference points: the relative overvaluation of US markets vis-à-vis the others; and the experience of the recent past. As far as valuation is concerned US shares are indeed expensive on most valuations by comparison with European markets, but they are not absurdly out of line. They are high, but we are high. And the history of the last Wall Street crash, of October 1987, suggests a strong linkage with all large markets except Tokyo.

A common sense conclusion would therefore be that a fall on Wall Street would make a serious dent in



ECONOMIC VIEW HAMISH MCRAE

European share prices, though the fall would not necessarily be a one-for-one relationship. The other, and in many ways more important link, is between financial markets and the real economy. As the *Economist* pointed out at the weekend, the collapse of the Japanese stock market has proved a serious inhibition on the recovery there. But Japan, with its substantial cross-holdings between companies, the weakness of its bank balance sheets and its tiny dividend yields,

been a sharp rise in the proportion of personal wealth held in mutual funds, unit trusts in our parlance. Indeed the flow of savings into these has been one of the main motors between Wall Street's recent strength. Suppose, so the argument runs, these funds are regarded by the holders as something akin to bank balances (though in reality they are nothing of the sort), then their value to fall US consumers would feel inhibited and cut back their spending. This would be a classic "wealth

'We like being gloomy; a share price crash would support our inclinations'

effect" as outlined in the economics textbooks, where a change in people's wealth, rather than their income, affects their spending. This sort of wealth effect from a change in share prices would be less likely to occur here because share prices play a much smaller role in our direct savings. They are enormously important in indirect savings through life assurance and pensions, but we do not see the notional value of a pension to be claimed in, say, 30 years, as relevant to our current spending, and who can blame us. House prices are far more relevant. Never the less, personal shareholdings have risen since the late 1980s as a result of the development

of Peps share bonus schemes and the continuing stream of privatisation issues. I think it would be reasonable to expect a sharp fall in share prices to have some impact on current spending, though more through a perception of confidence in the country's economy rather than any direct influence through the share price movement itself.

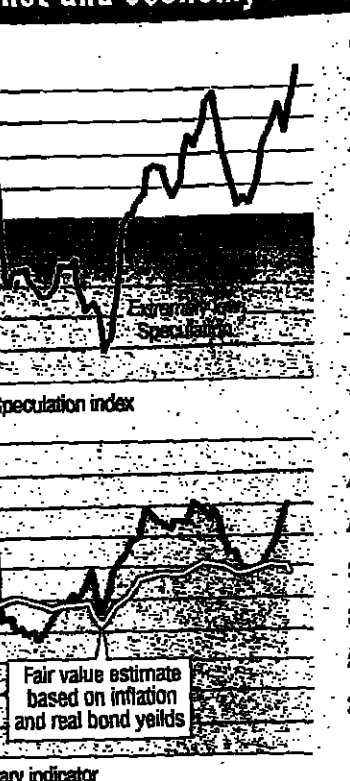
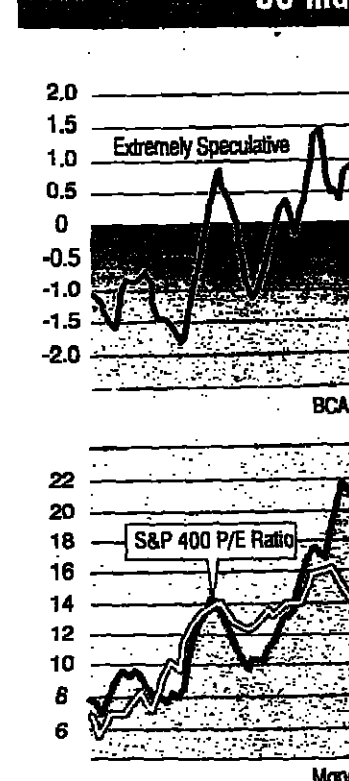
Another link is through business confidence. Companies see their share price falling and might feel more concerned about the business climate in general, cut back output and so on. Again this is the sort of thing noted in textbooks, but here I suspect there is even less of a link. Look at the way in which the present share price boom has failed to boost business confidence: the main drivers of that seem to be order books; sustained, profitable, practical demand for the product. True, lower share prices make raising new equity capital more expensive, but the proportion of companies which would need to raise new capital at any one particular time would be limited. Most would wait until things looked up and meanwhile increase their bank borrowings.

Potentially more worrying is the possibility that the Japanese disease would manifest itself in Europe: because of cross-holdings of companies capital a share price fall affecting the solidity of the banking system. This would not happen in the US or the UK because banks are not long-term holders of industrial companies' shares, but it is possible on the Continent, particularly in Germany.

Conventional analysis comes up with a fairly bland conclusion. Yes, a share price collapse would, through the wealth effect, have some impact on demand in the US and to a lesser

extent in Britain. But it would not be so dramatic that it could not be countered by a looser monetary policy. I would go along with that don't get excited line, but for three things. First, the US mutual fund link is important and new: we could see recession in the States, and if that happens it will surely spread here. Second, the fall in share prices, if delayed into next year, could come

US market and economy under pressure



at just the time when the next British government had to tighten policy to cut back consumer demand: the danger of the "triple whammy" of higher interest rates and higher taxes coupled with lower share prices all hitting the economy at just the wrong time. Remember, the US economy is at full capacity, with pressure on the labour market, as shown in the graphs on the right, and in any case higher interest rates will help drag up rates here.

Finally, the share-owning culture may have taken more root here than we realise and a change in the spending habits of a small proportion of the fairly rich might trickle down. We like being gloomy; a share price crash would give us additional support for our inclinations.

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
US	1.5543	4.2	5.2	10.00	10.00
Canada	2.1294	11.3	50.37	13.071	2.1
Germany	2.2746	48.41	140.30	152.78	26.24
France	6.0396	132.18	365.34	51.720	73.66
Italy	2.2881	48.43	142.86	153.65	44.51
Japan	172.25	75.70	225.28	110.02	45.44
ECU	1.2537	25.31	45.40	152.98	25.25
Belgium	46.889	12.7	32.26	31.455	5.18
Denmark	9.1491	59.76	145.235	5.8856	85.85
Netherlands	2.6648	65.67	197.175	17.145	35.32
Ireland	0.7946	7.3	20.14	15.948	4.7
Spain	163.13	120.30	310.500	42.17	110.30
Norway	9.6571	21.47	69.48	120.40	23.27
Sweden	10.408	0.6	1.9	6.6667	96.223
Switzerland	1.6635	54.46	165.522	37.34	10.107
Australia	1.9574	20.31	67.85	12.293	2.1
Hong Kong	12.031	101.61	224.170	7.740	9.2
Malaysia	3.6755	1.0	0.3	0.4588	4.14
New Zealand	2.2860	49.57	133.56	14.514	30.32
Saudi Arabia	5.2593	0.0	0.0	3.7508	2.7
Singapore	2.1885	0.0	0.0	14.45	41.30

Other Spot Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
Argentina	15505	0.9567	12.946	10.020	10.020
Australia	1.6716	10.967	10.968	10.968	10.968
Brazil	12.694	1.0046	8.387	40.760	35.048
China	8.2834	0.8167	0.8167	0.8167	0.8167
Egypt	5.2593	34.066	34.066	34.066	34.066
France	6.0396	132.18	365.34	51.720	73.66
Greece	373.449	239.800	239.800	239.800	239.800
India	54.784	35.260	35.260	35.260	35.260
Norway	0.4670	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004

Forward rates quoted high to low are at a discount; subject from spot rate add to spot rate.
*Dollar rates quoted as reciprocal.
For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033.
Calls cost 36p per minute (cheaper rate 48p over time).

Interest Rates

Country	Base	Discount	Prime	Repo	Repo
US	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
Germany	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
France	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
Italy	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
Japan	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
UK	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
Spain	5.75%	Discount	5.75%	Discount	5.75%
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sport

Spirits lifted by surprises galore

As we were saying a fortnight ago, before we were so rudely interrupted by falling seeds, regular sessions of water torture, and a streaker: "Wimbledon could turn out to be a tournament for the eccentrics."

The one constant factor was Steffi Graf, who overcame her aches, pains and snuffles and won the women's singles title for a seventh time in a repeat of last year's final against Arantza Sanchez-Vicario.

"I feel I'm in seventh heaven," Graf said during her speech at the champions' dinner at the Savoy, tossing in a little joke that when the All England Club's chairman, John Curry, did not arrive promptly she thought he might have been "arranging a male streaker for me."

The chairman had one or two other matters on his mind, such as when the tournament would finally end. He paid tribute to the efforts of his four-weather friends, Chris Corring, the chief executive, Alan Mills, the referee, and Eddie Seaward and his ground staff, all of whom had featured more prominently than the competitors at various times.

While Graf needed no introduction, the men's singles champion did, and perhaps the most touching moment of the evening came when the chairman presented Richard Krajicek with his purple and green membership tie.

The 24-year-old from Rotterdam is the first Dutchman to win a Grand Slam singles title, never mind the most prestigious of the four. He said he hoped that his victory would inspire young boys back home to pick up a racket. Whatever about that, it has certainly taken their minds off that 4-1 drubbing by England at Wembley.

Krajicek also shares with Boris Becker the distinction of being Wimbledon's only unseeded singles champions. The accomplishment was denied to eight other unseeded finalists, Wilmer Allison, Kurt Nielsen, Rod Laver, Marty Mulligan,

Expect the unexpected

John Roberts' pre-tournament prediction

Fred Stolle, Wilhelm Bungert, Chris Lewis and, of course, MaliVai Washington, who was defeated by Krajicek on Sunday, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3.

Washington, while disappointed not to be in possession of "a beautiful cup", accepted his invitation to the dinner and was arguably the most popular person in the room. The 27-year-old American may not have won the big

prize, but he certainly charmed the spectators. As for the new champion, it would be misleading to describe Krajicek as a late developer, especially since he has suffered almost as many injury problems as Graf.

One of his most frustrating experiences came at the Australian Open in 1992, when he defeated Michael Stich, the previous year's Wimbledon champion, in five sets in the quarter-finals but had to miss the semi-final match against Jim Courier after damaging his right shoulder playing doubles.

Krajicek hardly made the most promising of starts to this year's campaign. He lost to Greg Rusedski, 7-6, 7-6, in the opening round of the Sydney tournament in January, and retired hurt during his match against the Frenchman Jean-Philippe Fleurian in the third round of the Australian Open.

Andre Agassi said of Krajicek: "He only has to think about tennis and he gets injured." A glance at their relative achievements so far this season suggests that Agassi would be advised to apply his own mind and body to the game.

Krajicek, who is 6ft 5in, always had the potential to make an impact on grass courts, but he tended to lack the confidence in his return game to maximise the advantage of a mighty serve. He advanced to the third round in 1991 and 1992, and the fourth round in 1993, but consecutive first-round defeats persuaded the All England Club not to give him a seeding, even though he came 11th to the tournament ranked No 13 in the world.

"I was surprised I wasn't seeded, of course," he said after the final, "because I had been playing well, although it was on clay, in the finals of Rome and the quarter-finals in the French Open. But I understood a little bit, because in the last two years I lost in the first round. It does not bother me too much. It's not like I have the feeling that I have proved something to the committee."

The way he dismantled Stich in the fourth round and Pete Sampras, the holder of the title for the previous three years, in the quarter-finals, proved something to everybody.

Tim Henman, while lacking Krajicek's physical presence, can take encouragement from the Dutchman's success. At the same time, Henman's prospects of winning Wimbledon one day should not obscure the essential point, that the nation at last has a contender of substance on the ATP Tour.

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Double delight: Martina Hingis (right) and Helena Sukova on their way to victory yesterday

Photograph: Adam Butler/PA

Attendances were down for a variety of reasons - Euro 96, a couple of tube strikes, inclement weather after the previous three championships had been bathed in sunshine, and the early elimination of such notable names as Agassi, Monica Seles, Stefan Edberg and Boris Becker, who injured a wrist.

Few major entertainment productions would be able to withstand such a culling, and the international television net-

works became increasingly uneasy as the days went by. Tennis has always been driven by personality, but the sport's transformation as an industry since embracing professionalism in 1968 has intensified the demand for star names to sell tournaments.

The position may not have been so acute back in 1973, when Wimbledon boasted record crowds even though the majority of the leading men

boycotted the championships because of a dispute between the Association of Tennis Professionals and the International Tennis Federation.

In the final, Jan Kodeš, the Czech No 2 seed, defeated Alex Metreveli, from the Soviet Union, the No 4 seed, but it could hardly be said that the draw was completely lacking in characters, with Ilie Nastase seeded No 1 and Jimmy Connors at No 5. In addition, a 17-

year-old Swede by the name of Bjorn Borg was defeated in the quarter-finals by a Briton, Roger Taylor.

Overall, the All England Club is left with much to consider in the months ahead. And perhaps, when the item headed "streaker" is discussed, some of the older members may smile and ask themselves why "Gorgeous Gussie" Moran's lace panties caused such shock horror in 1949.

Martina Hingis yesterday became the youngest Wimbledon champion in history - aged 15 years and 282 days - after she and partner Helena Sukova quickly completed a rain-delayed women's doubles victory.

The Swiss girl and Sukova celebrated after their victory over Meredith McGrath and Larisa Nieland by 5-7, 7-5, 6-1 as Wimbledon went into its third week.

"It's great to win at Wimbledon. For every tennis player it's a big goal to win Wimbledon, even the doubles," said Hingis, who is three days younger than the previous youngest, Lottie Dod, who took the singles title in 1887.

Hingis, beaten by the seven-times champion Steffi Graf in the singles, added: "Hopefully one day I'll do it in the singles too." The final had been held over from yesterday because of persistent rain interruptions, but Centre Court was packed as fans took advantage of free admission.

The resumption was held up for 15 minutes to allow hundreds of late arrivals the chance to take their seats - then the action lasted just three minutes.

Hingis and Sukova, from the Czech Republic, had been a set and 5-2 down but had turned the match around to lead overnight 4-1 in the third set.

Sukova held her serve to 15 and she and Hingis gained their first match points at 15-40 with the American, McGrath, serving.

Sukova squandered the first with a forehand over the baseline. But Hingis clinched their victory with a backhand down the line at Nieland's feet when the Latvian's backhand failed to get the ball back over the net.

Sukova also carried off the mixed doubles with her brother, Cyril Suk, after a marathon stint. Sukova played three matches in the mixed yesterday, winning her quarter-final against the Americans Luke Jensen and Nicole Arendt 6-3, 2-6, 10-8; her semi-final against the Canadian Grant Connell and the American Lindsay Davenport 6-4, 6-2; and the final against the Australian Mark Woodford and the unfortunate Nieland 1-6, 6-3, 6-2.

Kent emerge top dogs

Cricket

DAVID LLEWELLYN
reports from Maidstone
Kent 363 & 244
Durham 269 & 255
Kent win by 83 runs

There is no doubt about it, cricket is a dog's life. Kent, who finished bottom of the pile last season, are back as County Championship top dogs after Durham rolled over with a whimper and handed them a comfortable victory and maximum points here yesterday.

From the moment Carl Hooper's off-spin tempted Stewart Hutton into presenting mid-on with his wicket Kent were hungry to snatch the match from their opponents. They scented victory from then on and circled

their prey like a pack of wolves, picking off stragglers and stragglers and enticing away the stronger ones into ambushes.

Finally the *coup de grace*. A murderous burst of fast bowling by the England discard, Martin McCague, docked the Durham tail before it had much of a chance to wag, picking up two of the last three wickets, which fell in the space of a dozen balls shortly after the game entered the final 16 overs.

Durham are now without a win in their opening 10 matches, while Kent are five points clear this morning. McCague's three wickets took his tally to 38 and there was an encouraging trio of victims for Dean Headley. Unfortunately, having returned to action following a serious hip problem, Headley, nicknamed "Frog", had to hop

out of the action shortly before McCague began the last rites. He strained his left ankle, although he was confident of being fit for the NatWest second round tie at Derby tomorrow.

Give their record this season, the 328 runs that Durham needed for victory when they set out yesterday were always going to be too many, but they had all second-innings wickets standing and Sherwin Campbell, the West Indies Test opener, wanted a second Championship century to convince sceptical Durham fans that he is worthy signing. He did not get it. After nearly four hours of graft he could not resist a slash at Nigel Long and fell in the gully 15 runs short of three figures.

With him went any realistic hopes of a Durham win, yet there was always the hope that



McCague: Three-wicket haul

they could hold out for the draw. But when the captain, Mike Roseberry, still baffling for form despite a first-innings half-century, departed for an ineffectual 17 only Phil Baines stood in the way of annihilation, and his hour and a half of snarling at the Kent predators was wiped out when McCague thundered in from the Rugby End and sparked a savage finish.

Millns doubles the punishment

MICHAEL AUSTIN

reports from Leicester
Leicestershire 454-9 dec
Essex 163 and 247
Leicestershire win by innings and 44 runs

This was a romantic match for David Millns and the result a boon for Leicestershire. County champions for the only time 21 years ago, they have swept back into the top three in the table. Romance for Millns, 31, was joining the rare breed of those who have taken 10 wickets in a game and scored a first-innings century, a maiden one at that - more akin in modern times to Sir Garfield Sobers, Mike Procter and Ian Botham.

Millns, an England A tourist, was at his devastating best as he

took 6 for 20 in 7.4 overs in the second innings, returned 10 for 128 overall, and offered a reminder of what could have been in a career that began with Nottinghamshire.

His performance meant that Essex were sent packing, back to Chelmsford, for lighter duties in the NatWest Trophy against Durham tomorrow. They were beaten by pure Leicestershire professionalism: fast bowling and outstanding catches - by Adrian Pierson at wide third slip and Aftab Habib at long off.

Leicestershire have the bonding factor - the new-age cricket huddle borrowed from rugby. Someone called it "bondage", maybe because when a batsman is dismissed, the fielders link arms in a circle. They also have a designated daily catchword in these post-wicket rituals.

It was probably "golf" this time because they were well on course for that before lunch.

As for Millns, he was mean and magnificent, and had a catalogue of success that would have made Essex's Ronnie Irani weep. Irani, omitted by England, dashed from Trent Bridge last week, only to bag a pair in six balls and be dispatched for four an over when bowling.

It was another triumph for Leicestershire, having beaten Yorkshire, also by an innings, in their previous match. They have been lightly regarded for unimpressive years, but Essex, with seven assorted duds in the 1980s to Leicestershire's one, do not view it that way. They have now lost five consecutive Championship matches to perhaps the county that might be regarded as their Midlands equivalents -

home-spun upstairs away from the Test ground focus.

The wickets grabbed by Millns in the second innings were clear-cut: Paul Prichard leg-before to a ball reaching slightly low; Irani dismissed playing a poor stroke; Robert Rollins hanging around and waiting for a caught-at-the-wicket decision; Such and Neil Williams brilliantly taken. Finally, Ashley Cowan's off-stump was clipped, all in 15.4 overs.

■ Martin Bicknell and Brendon Julian bowled Surrey back into title contention yesterday with their first Championship success against Middlesex for nine years. Bicknell took 4 for 57 and Julian 3 for 54 as Surrey shot Middlesex out for 194 in their second innings at the Foster's Oval. Surrey raced to 61 for 3 to win by seven wickets - and pick up maximum points.

Northants in fine fettle for the Cup

ADAM SZRETER

reports from Northampton
Northamptonshire 152 &
396-4 dec
Pakistan 323 & 205-8
Match drawn

A day that began steadily, ended brightly but sagged rather shabbily in the middle, will ultimately have left neither side with cause for complaint as they focus on their more significant tasks ahead.

The tourists will be happy in the knowledge that, in Shadab Kabir they have uncovered a real gem of a left-handed batsman, waiting for his opportunity at Test level should Ijaz Ahmed, Inzamam-ul-Haq or Salim Malik fluff their lines.

Northamptonshire will go into their Cup double-header with Lancashire, first at Old Trafford tomorrow and then at Lord's on Saturday, in confident mood after an opening stand between Richard Montgomerie and Alan Fordham that was worth 255 when Fordham decided to retire.

Quite why he took that decision remained a mystery for some time, although as he has played little first-team cricket this season and is unlikely to feature in the Benson and Hedges Cup final perhaps he felt obliged to

give a chance to someone who would be playing at Lord's. In the end, perhaps mindful of his average, he was listed as retired hurt, with apparent eye trouble, rather than retired out.

Fordham had reached a creditable century in the last over before lunch. Montgomerie went on to emulate his partner but the bowling throughout the afternoon was not very serious.

In all, Pakistan used 10 bowlers and two wicketkeepers before the declaration came, setting a target of 226 in what turned out to be 33 overs.

Kabir was promoted to open and he proceeded to cut and drive his way to 52 from only 60 balls before being caught low down at short extra cover by Rob Bailey off Jeremy Snape.

Wasim Akram and Ijaz Ahmed threatened to launch an assault, but it was nipped in the bud when Ijaz was run out for 39, made from only 30 balls. Wasim perished soon after and when Rashid Latif was bowled by Snape for a duck the game seemed to be up for Pakistan.

But Moin Khan and Asif Mujtaba took an instant liking to Snape's off-spin and put on 63 in double-quick time. Moin, eventually fell for 39 and the draw was effectively sealed when Montgomerie held a steeping catch to dismiss Saeed Anwar in the penultimate over.

British Assurance County Championship

First day of four

Leicestershire v Gloucestershire

Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

Pakistan 323 & 205-8

Match drawn

Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

Pakistan 323 & 205-8

Match drawn

Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

Pakistan 323 & 205-8

Match drawn

Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

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Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

Pakistan 323 & 205-8

Match drawn

Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

Pakistan 323 & 205-8

Match drawn

Leicestershire 152 & 396-4 dec

Pakistan 323 & 205-8

Match drawn

Kent v Durham

MAIDSTONE: Kent (24pts) beat Durham (0) by 83 runs.

Kent won toss.

Kent: 363 & 244; Durham: 269 & 255.

Kent won by 83 runs.

Kent: 363 & 244; Durham: 269 & 255.

Kent won by 83 runs.

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Kent won by 83 runs.

Kent: 363 & 244; Durham: 269 & 255.

CRICKET SCOREBOARD

Warwickshire v Notts	
EDWARDS: Leicestershire (21st) beat Essex (2nd) by 85 runs.	
Warwickshire won toss	
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Berzin's lead melts away in snow

Cycling

ROBIN NICHOLL
with the Tour de France

It was a bizarre day of ups and downs in the Tour de France yesterday. First it snowed, then the 189 kilometres into Italy was reduced to 46. The day ended with Bjørn Riis in the yellow jersey and Yevgeny Berzin, the overnight leader, in second place.

The giant Dane rode into the ski resort of Sestriere alone and triumphant after escaping midway through the race on the Col de Montgenèvre to wipe out Berzin's advantage of 35 seconds. Berzin lost ground on the long drag to Sestriere and finished 1min 23sec behind.

Riis, third in last year's race, now leads by 40 seconds. His victory was about the only clear-cut event of a day that Jean-Marie Leblanc and his fellow organisers would like to forget.

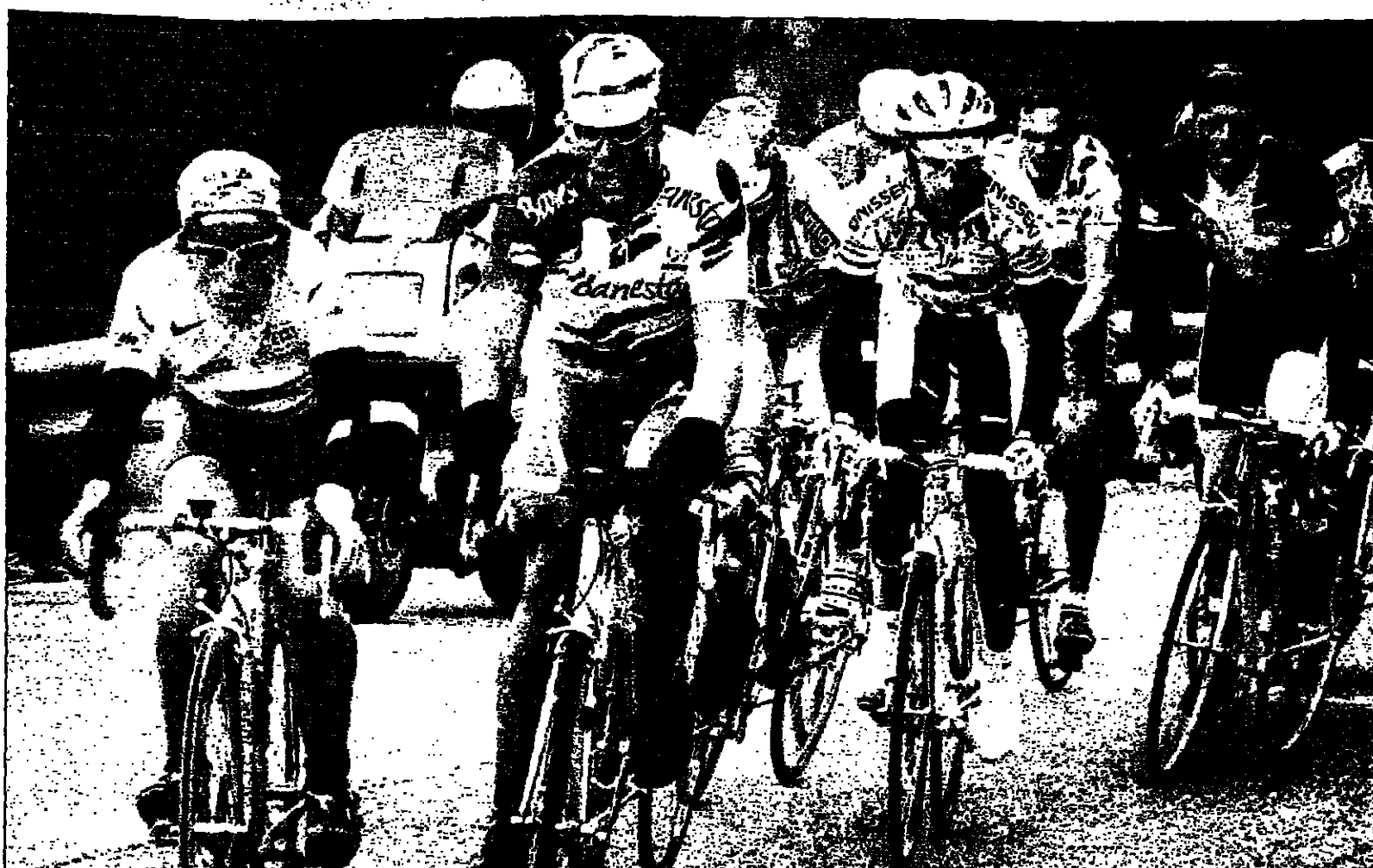
The original start at Val d'Isère was cancelled before breakfast after overnight reports of snow and strong winds on the highest climb of this Tour, the 2,770 metre Col d'Iseran.

Then, with everything in place to start the race from Lanslebourg at noon, 15km into the original route, similar conditions were reported on the 2,640 metres Col du Galibier. The stage was further reduced, and rescheduled to start at 3pm from Montier-les-Bains.

The riders rode most of the route in team cars and were led over the Isère by a snowplough. "I was frustrated by the changes because I had a plan to attack, but when I saw what it was like I realised that we could not have raced on those mountains," Riis said.

Leblanc has handled emergencies in the past, but this was the first occasion that the weather had caused mayhem for him. It was, after all, July. "It was a shame for the climbers," Leblanc said. "But what we had to do was commonsense, and for the safety of the riders."

On the road to the Col du Galibier there was total confusion. A long line of traffic drove



Miguel Indurain and Yevgeny Berzin lead the chasing pack into Sestriere yesterday

Photograph: Jacky Naegelen/Reuters

up the mountain. Advised that the road was closed, they drove down again until the message reached them that it was open. On the slopes, frozen spectators gave the thumbs down to the passing vehicles and shouted insults. On the Isère pass things got nastier as spectators, who had spent a freezing night in their camper vans, threw nails on the road.

The Tour has suffered vicious weather since it started 10 days ago but Miguel Indurain has remained calm even in his week-end setbacks.

"Riis is dangerous and has a good team. I intend to attack but always intelligently," he

said, knowing that he still has 12 days to claw back just over four minutes.

His team director, Eusebio Unzué, was equally positive. "Miguel is recuperating and with the weather due to improve he should find his true form," he said. "There were signs in this stage, because in the final kilometre he recovered 20 seconds."

Indurain particularly wants to make a triumphal entrance into his home town of Pamplona in nine days' time. This will be the biggest test of his impressive reign and could be the revival of a Tour mummified by his stiff talents.

TOUR DE FRANCE (Stage 9, 28.6 miles, Montier-les-Bains to Sestriere) 1. Riis (Den) Deutsche Telekom 1hr 10min 44sec; 2. Berzin (Uzb) Team Telekom 1hr 11min 19sec; 3. Indurain (Spa) Euzépatel 1hr 11min 24sec; 4. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 5. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 6. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 7. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 8. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 9. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 10. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 11. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 12. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 13. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 14. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 15. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 16. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 17. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 18. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 19. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 20. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 21. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 22. Basso (Ita) Festina 1hr 11min 25sec; 23. 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